



BATTLE VOW OVER BADGER CULL BID

Report by Jonny Drury

A LEADING wildlife activist says protesters will “come together in their thousands” to battle plans to introduce a badger cull in Shropshire.

Jeanette Salisbury-Roberts, from Weston Rhyn near Oswestry, who helped set up the Shropshire Against The Badger Cull Facebook page, vowed campaigners would take their fight to the woods and fields of the county if a cull was given the go-ahead.

The Government has announced a consultation to seek the public's views on extending the cull to eight more counties, including Shropshire and Staffordshire, in a bid to eradicate bovine TB.

The consultation on the plans to extend the cull runs until Monday.

Mrs Salisbury-Roberts, who took part in an anti-cull protest in Shrewsbury in 2014, said: “The great news for badgers and for us is that we will come together in our thousands to do everything we can to stop the extension of the cull.

“And if that should fail we will take the fight out into the woods and fields of Shropshire. Protesters have faced down marksmen and significantly disrupted every cull attempt to date.”

The proposed extension of the cull has been welcomed by Shropshire cattle farmer Richard Yates. He said: “This problem wanted dealing with 20 years ago. We are totally in favour of extending the cull and you will find that 99 per cent of farmers will agree.

“There is irrefutable evidence of a connection between bovine TB and badgers, and history tells us that the only way to deal with it is to cull the affected areas.

“We have lost 274,000 cattle in England over the past 10 years to TB and since the start of this year there have been 3,156 herds with bovine TB in England.”

However, the move has angered animal rights campaigners. Badger Trust chief executive Dominic Dyer said: “With plans to extend the badger cull into eight new counties in 2018 from Avon to Berkshire and Oxfordshire to Warwickshire, over 50,000 badgers could be killed this summer.

“The badger cull has already cost taxpayers over £50 million and is widely considered by leading scientists and conservationists to be cruel, costly and ineffective.”

The cull was first introduced on a trial basis in 1998, which involved badgers being trapped in cages and then shot, but was suspended in 2008.

The scheme was reintroduced in 2013 under then Environment Secretary and North Shropshire MP Owen Paterson.

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Exhibition is cut above the rest



Gallery worker Charlotte Jackson with pictures from the exhibition. Photo: Jamie Ricketts.

THE Qube Gallery in Oswestry is celebrating the folk art heritage of Eastern Europe with an exhibition called The Art of Polish Paper Cuts.

The exhibition is running at the gallery until April 9. It features a collection of floral and geometric patterns in a traditional art form known as Wycinanki.

Wycinanki dates back to the mid-19th century and was widely practised during the Communist era. Peasant woman used sheep shearing scissors and whatever paper they had to hand to create the shapes and decorate the whitewashed walls of their cottages. Exhibition curator Justyna Pyz said:

“This collection of Wycinanki is remarkably diverse and represents a fantastic opportunity to discover a folk art which has flourished and continues to develop in Poland.”

Qube's arts development officer Vanessa Baldry said: “We've spoken to members of the local Polish community and they are very excited about the exhibition. It's a unique opportunity for Polish families to re-connect with a part of their traditional heritage and for everyone else to see wonderful interpretations of folk art.”

For further details contact Qube on (01691) 656882.

RETAIL

Controversial idea to move market looks set to be scrapped

PLANS to move Welshpool market from the town hall to a car park should be scrapped, a council committee has concluded.

Welshpool Town Council had suggested moving the market to Church Street car park but angry traders set up a petition against the plans.

The saga took another twist last week when former councillor John Morgan launched a counter petition to close the market stating it was “embarrassing” and “a waste of money”.

A town council committee has now concluded that, after discussing a report on the market, it should remain in the town hall and be open six days a week.

The matter was due to be put forward to full council last night (Wednesday) for the committee's decision to be ratified.

Town Clerk Robert Robinson said results from a council survey were taken into account.

He said: “The council were made aware of the survey results, public comments and traders' views which along with economic and practical issues led the committee to support the report.”

Mayor Steve Kaye said the council had considered the costs and had listened to the public.

EDUCATION

Opposition to Welsh language suggestion

AN Oswestry resident says he will lodge a complaint to the local government ombudsman after two councillors called for Welsh to be taught in the town's schools.

Powys councillors Elwyn Vaughan and Bryn Davies last week said with a number of people in Oswestry speaking Welsh, there should be an opportunity to learn the language. Oswestry resident Richard Collis said the councillors have no right interfering with education in Shropshire.

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INSIDE

Mr Pink is the king of the castle



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Councillors 'over-stepped jurisdiction' in Welsh plea

Report by Jonny Drury

TWO Powys councillors who have called for the Welsh language to be taught in Oswestry schools have been accused of "over-stepping" their jurisdiction.

Councillors Elwyn Vaughan and Bryn Davies last week called for Welsh to be taught in schools in Oswestry because of the close links between the town and Wales.

However, Oswestry resident Richard Collis believes the councillors have no right interfering with education over the border.

He has written to the councillors to express his views, saying: "What right do those two councillors have to take it upon themselves in supporting an idea that the Welsh language should be brought into the English education curriculum in Oswestry?"

"For as long as I can remember Oswestry and surrounding villages are within the border of both England and Shropshire. I see no precedent to think why two neighbouring councillors should think otherwise.

"I clearly think that you have both clearly over-stepped your jurisdiction and that you focus both your concerns within your own county and nation.

"I shall be making a formal complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman in Wales."

In a response to Mr Collis's views, Councillor Vaughan said: "Multi lingualism is a valuable skill for young people and the development of opportunities to learn Welsh in whatever format is valuable as it provides economic opportunities on the doorstep." Schools which are under the responsibility of Shropshire Council have to teach what is on the national curriculum.

However, academy schools could bring in the Welsh language as it is for headteachers and governors to decide. Nick Bardsley, Shropshire Council's cabinet member for children's services and education, said: "Academies have greater freedom regarding curriculum content. It is for headteachers and governors to determine the curriculum they provide for pupils."

Cascading water leads to flooding fears



This photograph by Graham Mitchell shows the extent of the overflowing water problem in Oakhurst Road in Oswestry on Monday

WATER pouring from a manhole cover threatened to flood homes and businesses in Oswestry town centre on Monday - as flooding halted rail services.

Flooding on the track between Gobowen and Chirk led to delays in the service on the Shrewsbury to Chester rail line.

Problems began in the morning in Oswestry when passers-by noticed water flowing from drainage pipes at the bottom of a wall at the junction of Willow Street and Oakhurst Road.

Within an hour the flood water was pouring over the top of the retaining wall on which the town's fire station is built. Water was also erupting from a manhole cover in the grounds of the fire station.

Photographer and artist Graham Mitchell, who lives in nearby Oak Street, said the water was pouring down the roads and pavements.

Peter Rose, licensee of the White Lion at the top of Willow Street said: "The water got pretty close to getting into the pub but

it eased off and as long as we don't get any more rain we should be OK."

Adrian Bowen from Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service said it seemed a storm drain had become blocked, leading to the problem. A Severn Trent spokesperson said a team was sent to look for any blockages in the sewer network and to get things cleared up. Severn Trent workers were on scene Monday afternoon with only a small amount of water coming from the drain pipes at the bottom of the wall on Tuesday.



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Make-up of council is looking more green

OSWESTRY now has six Green Party members on its council following a by-election.

Delicatessen owner, Rosie Radford won the Cambrian Ward seat on Oswestry Town Council with 44 per cent of the votes.

She took 191 votes with the Conservatives receiving 122 votes, Labour 80 votes, and the Liberal Democrats 32.

The seat became vacant after Conservative councillor, Julie Edwards stood down.

Councillor Radford joins fellow Green Party Councillor Nikki Hughes in Cambrian Ward, as well as a further four Green councillors who were elected to Oswestry Town Council last May.

Speaking after the count, which was held at the Gatacre Pavilion in Oswestry, Councillor Radford said: "I am grateful to everyone who entrusted me with their vote."

"Oswestry badly needs a fresh approach and I'm delighted to join the growing Green team on the council to bring forward new ideas."

"If anyone would like to join our community campaign for Oswestry please get in touch."

As a former market trader, Councillor Radford was until recently chair of the Oswestry Market Hall Committee and also opened a cheese deli in Leg Street in the town centre.

Arts group to meet up again

THE March meeting of the Arts Society Mid Wales and Borders, formerly NADFAS, is on Thursday next week at the Royal Oak Hotel, Welshpool, at 2.30pm.

The speaker is Anthony Rayworth whose subject will be Classical Gardens, A New Perspective.

Visitors are welcome but a donation of £6 per person is requested.

TB cases in cattle rise in county, figures reveal

Report by James Pugh

MORE cattle were slaughtered in Shropshire last year as the number of cases of TB in herds increased in the county compared with 2016.

It comes after it was revealed the controversial badger cull looks set to be extended to Shropshire following an application to include the county in the scheme in a bid to eradicate bovine TB.

Figures released by the National Farmers' Union have revealed for the whole of 2016 there were 242 new TB incidents in herds and 1,419 animals slaughtered in Shropshire. For the first 11 months of 2017 there were 268 new herd incidents and 1,576 animals slaughtered.

The NFU said there are always slight fluctuations in the Defra figures year to year, due to the nature of the disease, however, the county remained a TB hotspot area with more and more family farms locked down and restricted.

Robert Newbery, NFU regional director, said: "Bovine TB remains a huge threat to Shropshire's beef and dairy industry and it is vital we do everything we can to tackle it."

"It has been proven, without doubt, that badgers are a reservoir of bTB and that disease transmits between badgers and cattle and vice versa."

However, attempts are being made to demonstrate that badger vaccination is a more effective and humane way of controlling the spread of TB than a cull.

Tris Pearce is licensed to vaccinate badgers and is involved in a badger vaccination programme in Shropshire. He said: "We vaccinate the young of the colony to build up a herd immunity. The cost is just £100 a vaccination which Shropshire Badger Trust is covering so that the programme is free to those farms who have signed up to the scheme. As I understand those 10 farmers are currently bovine TB free. However, we should not be looking at badgers at all. Britain should look not to badgers but to farming for eradicating bovine TB."

Domestic team are unsung heroes



Members of the domestic team with Kate Betts who nominated them for the national award

A TEAM that keeps a specialist spinal injuries unit clean has won a national unsung hero award.

The Midlands Centre for Spinal Injury's domestic team at the Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital won the ancillary staff team of the year at the inaugural unsung hero awards which celebrated the contributions of non-clinical NHS staff and volunteers.

Carol Pugh, Marina Owen, Barbara Dwyer, Tracey Edwards,

Shirley Buckley and Jane Herbert were nominated for the national award by Kate Betts, therapy technical instructor.

She said: "The spinal injury patients and their friends and families are dealing with life-changing devastating injuries and the domestic team can regularly be heard laughing and joking in good humour, telling the patients off for being messy."

"The patients have a relationship with the housekeepers, just as they

do with the nurses, doctors and therapists."

"They have the amazing skill of being visible and available to help, as well as quietly going about their duties in a caring, compassionate and professional manner."

"Compliments for the domestic team are never far away from patients, relatives and other members of staff."

The awards ceremony was held at The Principle Hotel in Manchester.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Time for a big town spring clean

WELSHPOOL Town Council is working together with Keep Wales Tidy this week.

The aim of the work is for local groups, clubs and residents to take a proactive approach in tidying up the town.

Anybody interested in getting involved is encouraged to go along to the events.

Among the events is a community spring clean day.

That takes place on Sunday and will see residents carry out numerous cleaning tasks around the town, with people asked to meet at the tourist information centre at 10am.

Inspirational talk for flower club

OSWESTRY and Borders Flower Club held a recent workshop on hand tied bouquets led by Eileen Scott of Llan-silin.

The next meeting is on Tuesday at 7.30pm at Morda Village Hall, where the group will welcome Dorothy Monks of Holmes Chapel with her title 'Inspiration All Around Us'.

For more information or to join the club contact Eleanor Davies on (01691) 657763.

Church to host musical evening

AN evening in atmospheric Whittington Church on Saturday at 7.30pm will seek to recreate the golden age of English music during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The sixteen-strong "Scholars and Gentlemen" choir based at St Oswald's in Oswestry will perform pieces commissioned originally for the Chapel Royal and so heard for the first time by the ruling monarchs of the period.

Composers include Tallis, Byrd and Purcell.

Tickets at £10 can be bought at the door of St John the Baptist Church or in advance at Rowanthorn in Oswestry.

The event is to benefit Whittington's week-long music festival in May.





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Photo: Welshpool Fire Station

Crews called to chemical fire alert

A POTENTIALLY serious incident was avoided in Mid Wales on Thursday last week after a chemical tanker caught fire.

The emergency services said the lorry driver's quick actions in unhitching his trailer prevented a more serious incident.

Fire crews from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service were called to the A483 at Garthmyl, between Newtown and Welshpool around lunchtime, where a lorry had caught fire.

A specialist chemical unit from Newtown attended the incident

after it was discovered the lorry was pulling a trailer of molten sulphur.

The lorry driver realised the fire was in the cab and unhitched the trailer which avoided a bigger incident.

A spokesman for the fire service said: "The lorry driver realised the

cab was on fire and he quickly unhitched the trailer which allowed the firefighters to contain the fire to the cab and not let it spread.

"It was a chemical tanker transporting molten sulphur, which can be dangerous in a fire but it was quickly extinguished."

Council tax rise will help county's most vulnerable

Report by Jonny Drury

TAX payers are facing a rates increase due to services for the most vulnerable in Powys being found wanting.

That is according to finance portfolio holder Aled Davies after Powys County Council confirmed a tax increase of five per cent which will see an average band D property paying an extra £56 per year.

It will bring in an extra £3.5 million for the cash strapped council. Councillor Davies said failing services, such as the children's services, is one of the main reasons why the council

has had to rubber stamp the tax hike.

He said: "Like all county councils in Wales we are facing increasing costs as a result of extra demand on services, at a time when resources are under greater pressure than ever."

"We are responsible for protecting the most vulnerable, and clearly some of our services have been found wanting recently."

"The additional revenue will be used to help support key services, particularly children and adult social services. We must look after the most vulnerable in society and restore confidence in those services"

"We know our schools are facing challenging financial times and our plans will provide an additional £1m to help them with inflationary pressures."

The tax hike was criticised from some quarters of the council chamber as the tax hike was sealed for the coming year at a meeting last week.

Mr Davies has stated that the council needs to look at other avenues and again insisted a range of services will be looked at with possible cuts on the way.

He added: "We simply cannot afford the council in its current form."

Pupils' Cranmer Awards joy



Moreton Hall School's Emily King receives her certificate from Quentin Letts

FOUR pupils from a school near Oswestry have been rewarded with special certificates to mark their achievements in qualifying for the finals of The Cranmer Awards. Lydia Cobb, 13, Grace Honey, 14, Holly Jones, 16, and Emily King, 16, from Moreton Hall School, all received prizes in the competition, which has taken place annually since 1989.

Run by the Prayer Book Society, the contest introduces young people to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer created by

Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, during the Reformation.

All contestants memorised and spoke by heart passages from The Book of Common Prayer in front of an audience of more than 100 comprising parents, teachers, clergy and members of the Prayer Book Society.

More than 300 school pupils entered local heats and 27 competed in the finals held at Old Palace in Worcester. The certificates were presented by the journalist, theatre critic and author Quentin Letts.

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Town in 'desperate need now' for employment land

Report by Jonny Drury

FIRMS will leave Oswestry if something is not done urgently about the "desperate" need for employment land, a meeting of business leaders has been warned.

The warning was given at a meeting of Oswestry Chamber of Commerce which had been called to allow Shropshire Council chiefs to outline future employment and housing plans which are set to transform the town.

'Give local firms chance to seal work'

A BUSINESS leader has asked Shropshire Council bosses to do what they can to ensure Oswestry firms win contracts for major building works earmarked for the town.

Hundreds of houses are set to be built in the town and an Innovation Park aimed at bringing in new firms is to be built just off the Mile End roundabout.

Ian Follington from Oswestry's BID team told a meeting of the town's chamber of commerce on Wednesday last week it was important that local firms had the chance to benefit from the building work and the planned development.

He said: "If businesses that come from other parts of the country or overseas get the work, that's an opportunity missed for the town itself."

Shropshire Council's head of economic growth Gemma Davies told the chamber meeting work was being done to ensure Oswestry had the right infrastructure to cope with plans for the Innovation Park, as well as plans for up to 750 new homes.

Shropshire Council's growth programme and strategy manager Hayley Owen told the chamber meeting the authority was keen to drive development for Oswestry to improve the town and its economic opportunities.

Among the plans is the development of Oswestry Innovation Park on the edge of the town, which Shirehall bosses hope will create hundreds of jobs.

However, the meeting on Wednesday last week heard that the park will not be completed for some time, and was also told by a commercial property expert that businesses needed new employment land to be made available now.

Stuart Phillips from property consultants Celt Rowlands and Co said: "There is a big demand for industrial land and a tiny supply."

He warned: "The demand for industrial land is now."

"There are companies in Oswestry quite literally desperate for land."

"We will lose employers and we will lose employees."

Mr Phillips said land which was earmarked for a new Morrisons supermarket should be used to meet the demand for employment land. The land on Shrewsbury Road remains derelict after the store plans fell through.

He added: "Businesses would really like to see that land released."

He urged Shropshire Council bosses to resist any moves to have the site used for housing.

Shropshire Council Deputy Leader Steve Charmley told the meeting that the Shrewsbury Road site remained an important site to the economic development of Oswestry.

He said: "In my view the majority of that site should remain as employment or leisure land."

"I don't see it as a particularly valid site for housing."

He added that despite reports to the contrary, nobody had approached the council recently with a plan for the site.

Beer celebrates war poet Owen



Shane Parr from Stonehouse Brewery with the new brew called Futility

HE has been celebrated in many different ways over the last 100 years.

Now Wilfred Owen, the great Oswestry-born poet of the First World War, will be honoured with his own beer.

Stonehouse Brewery in Morda, near Oswestry has developed a new beer called 'Futility' named after one of his poems, to mark the 100th anniversary of his death.

Five pence from each pint sold will be donated to the Wilfred Owen Festival which will coincide with the centenary of Owen's death and the centenary of Armistice Day.

The festival is being held in Oswestry in

October and November and once the festival concludes, Stonehouse Brewery will then donate 5p per pint to the Last Post Association - which ensures that the Last Post is played in the Menin Gate at 8pm every evening in perpetuity.

Shane Parr from Stonehouse Brewery said: "Futility will be a session strength beer and brewed with a combination of French hops and a new variety of British hops. We really hope that people get behind this."

"The Wilfred Owen Festival has a lot to offer visitors to Shropshire this year."

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BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

What's so "green" about Oswestry you might be asking after hearing that the town now has no less than six Green Party members on the town council. Local businesswoman Rosie Radford just swept to victory in a by-election caused by the resignation of Conservative councillor Julie Edwards with 44 per cent of the votes in an election contested by Conservatives, Liberals and Labour and joins the five other Greens already firmly sat in the council chamber.

The news means there could soon be some interesting discussions in the Oswestry chamber from the members of the Shrewsbury and North Shropshire party which covers the Parliamentary constituencies of Shrewsbury and Atcham and North Shropshire.

The Green Party is opposed to plans to build new roads in Shrewsbury which will link to the much-needed dual carriageway between Shrewsbury and Wrexham because of impact on the environment. That will certainly lead to a few difficult discussions in the Oswestry council chamber where the need for better road-works has been highlighted.

The emergence of the Green Party in Oswestry will be a worry to the other parties, particularly those swept aside by Councillor Radford in last week's by-election. She picked up 191 votes against the Conservative's 122, while Labour only managed 80 and the Liberal Democrats just 32. Judging by how active the Greens have been in the last six months things look set to really hot up at the Guild Hall as the balance of power begins to shift.

There's amazing news that Powys schoolchildren have collected over 1.7 tonnes of household batteries as part of a recycling challenge organised by Powys County Council - that's the weight of an average size family car. Over 4,000 children took part in the challenge during the autumn school term, meaning that over 78,000 batteries have been diverted from landfill and will be recycled thanks to the competition. This was a truly great initiative and a valuable learning experience for the pupils too. We should all be encouraged to recycle batteries rather than simply throwing them in the bin. So why aren't there more collection points? I'm told that shops selling more than 32kg of batteries in a year have to provide battery recycling collection facilities. I'm going to be looking a lot closer now because I don't remember seeing one anywhere.



A photograph of Agnes Hunt at a young age



Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt



The orthopaedic hospital at Gobowen today

Agnes's amazing caring legacy lives on to this day

MARK ANDREWS tells the story of an inspirational woman who has left an incredible legacy

LAST week's International Women's Day offered a chance to remember women who have been an inspiration to generations of people.

Oswestry of course has on its doorstep a hospital named in tribute to a woman who overcome her own challenges to become the world's first orthopaedic nurse.

As a youngster, Agnes Hunt would weep over her suffering. At the age of nine, a blood infection left her with a disability that caused constant pain, and made walking difficult.

But the comforting words of a clergyman gave the youngster the steely determination to overcome her condition and transform the lives of millions by becoming the world's first orthopaedic nurse. She went on, with the help of top surgeon Robert Jones, to form what is now the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, one of the most highly regarded centres of its kind in the county. But if that were not enough, she also founded a pioneering college that would change the lives of disabled people by helping them get into work. Last week, to mark International Women's Day, Derwen College in Gobowen paid tribute to the achievements of its incredible founder.

Tonia Davies, who is marketing co-ordinator at the college, next door to the orthopaedic hospital, says Agnes was a tireless champion of the disadvantaged



Agnes Hunt with Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent, in 1943

in society. "She continually worked for those who were vulnerable in society ensuring they had opportunities to be part of their communities as other people were," says Mrs Davies.

Agnes Hunt was born on New Year's Eve in 1866. At the age of nine Agnes developed septicaemia. This infection spread to her hip resulting in osteomyelitis, an inflammatory condition of the bone. One day, as young Agnes cried over her plight, a clergyman came into the room, and wrote in her birthday book: "Reared in suffering thou shalt know, How to solace others' woe. The reward of pain doth lie, in the gift of sympathy."

Dame Agnes later spoke of the effect these words would have on her life.

"The result of this talk was that I began to think I had been especially sent on earth to help other cripples. I determined to become a hospital nurse."

Following the death of her father, young Agnes went to live with her

mother in Australia, before returning to England in 1887.

She began training as a nurse at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Rhyl, and her early career included fighting typhoid in Rushden, Northamptonshire, and a smallpox epidemic in Middlesbrough. In 1900, when Agnes was working as a district nurse, her mother Florence decided she was going to come and live with her daughter, and proposed they should live at Florence House in Baschurch. Agnes and her close friend Emily Goodford, a fellow nurse, were to move in and set up a convalescent home, which would be an outpost for the Salop Infirmary in Shrewsbury. Florence House proved unsuitable as a home for disabled children because the wards were upstairs. To get around this problem, and continuing a fresh-air concept, Agnes built sheds in the grounds of the house which had only three sides, with the fourth side exposed to the elements.

Towards the end of 1903 Agnes's own

condition had worsened to the extent that she was struggling to walk, and she went to see eminent orthopaedic surgeon Robert Jones at his surgery in Liverpool. Jones operated on her, and the two became firm friends, and Agnes invited him to see the work she was doing in Shropshire.

So impressed was Jones that he agreed to allow Agnes to bring children to him once a month for treatment. But after seeing the difficulties of transporting sick children from Baschurch to Liverpool, he agreed to become Agnes's honorary surgeon.

By 1921, the hospital had outgrown Florence House, and moved to the former Park Hall military hospital at Gobowen. Funded with £27,000 from the Red Cross, this would become the present hospital site, but this was not the end of her work. After being made a Dame in 1926, she bought a house next to the hospital called The Derwen, along with 35 acres of land, which she developed as the Derwen Cripples Training College, which enabled physically disabled people to learn a trade suitable to their disability, and become either partially or wholly self-supporting. Dame Agnes continued to devote herself to Derwen until her death in 1948. Work on her final dream, a purpose-built housing scheme for the disabled, called Agnes Hunt Village, began in 1952, and the bungalows that were built are still in use today. Mrs Davies says Dame Agnes's work has transformed the way disabled people are seen by society, and her work lives on in the college today.

"With skilled knowledge, disabled people were able to contribute to the working world and take their place in society," she says.

"Ninety one years later, the legacy of Dame Agnes is still inspiring students and staff alike at the college."

PETER RHODES

AMAZON promises to stop its Alexa gadgets emitting unexplained "witch-like" laughter. I bet there's a simple explanation. Alexa is merely one device in households which are increasingly fitted with appliances using smart technology. These gizmos have probably started chatting to each other. If Alexa laughs it's probably because the fridge has just told a joke.

DO you sometimes flick through the news and think: "Shouldn't this story be given a bigger showing?" Two items of global importance were tucked away a few days ago. The first was the Alzheimer's expert Professor Michel Goedert predicting that within a few decades the disease will 'disappear as a major problem from society', thanks to new drug treatments. Next to it was a report that sperm counts in men from America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand have dropped by more than 50 per cent in 40 years. While we all focus on Brexit, the dazzling prospect of a dementia-free world is barely noticed and nor is the suggestion that, in or out of the EU, we humans may be an endangered species.

I WROTE recently about people who are allegedly famous but we've never heard of. They are usually introduced on the telly or radio with words such as iconic or legendary. This creates the impression, for example, that a third-rate musician in a long-forgotten band is someone we all remember, or at least should remember.

At times like this I am reminded of a genuine celebrity, Patricia Routledge, whose character Dot, the busybody housewife from Cheshire, delivered a magnificent put-down to someone claiming to be famous: "Well, he's yet to click in Cheadle." Dot's scripts were written by the late, great Victoria Wood, and you could hear it in every lugubrious North Country phrase. Dot had a grumbling ovary and "walked the Pennine Way in slingshots to draw attention to mental health".

I THOUGHT of Dot a few days ago when Radio 4 announced a new exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum featuring the wardrobe of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Kahlo (1907-1954) was a painter, fashion icon, communist and peace campaigner who was famous for her eyebrow pencil. She suffered appalling health and, after losing a leg to gangrene wore a false leg with a red boot decorated with bells. And I'd never even heard of her. The lady with the bells on her leg didn't ring a bell. Oh, the irony.

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SHOULD I CHANGE NAME ON MY HOUSE DEEDS NOW THAT I'M MARRIED?

Q: My husband and I bought our house together two years ago and have just got married. I've contacted my bank, HMRC and so on to let them know my married name but a friend said I also need to change the name on the house deeds. Is this necessary and do I need to do it through a solicitor?

A: It is not a legal requirement to update your property deeds when you get married, but if you have changed your name either the deeds will have to be changed before you can sell the property or you would need to produce a certified copy of your marriage certificate on sale. If you leave it until the point of sale it can cause a delay so it is preferable to get the Land Registry record updated beforehand.

Getting the name changed on your deeds is an easy process and you do not need to involve a solicitor. Generally there is no fee to pay either. You simply need to send a letter to the Land Registry office requesting the name change, together with either the original or a certified copy of your marriage certificate.

It is surprising how many couples own property together before entering into a marriage or civil partnership, and as a result change their names, and do not think to change the name on their deeds until the conveyancing solicitor handling the later sale of their property makes the discovery.

It is particularly difficult if the property is being sold after a divorce because there is no longer a marriage certificate to submit. So you can end up with a situation whereby identity documents are in someone's married name but the property is in their maiden name. Even more difficult is if after the divorce one party remains in the property, remarries and acquires yet another name.

Further information relating to this question is available from Heather Foulkes, a Solicitor with GHP Legal. For an appointment visit www.ghplegal.com or contact one of our offices: Oswestry 01691 659194, Chirk 01691 777949, Wrexham 01978 291456, Llangollen 01978 860313. We offer free legal diagnostic clinics (no appointment necessary). In Oswestry, Wednesdays 12noon - 3pm for Personal Injury, Employment & Family matters. In Wrexham, Mondays 9.30am-12noon for Employment matters, 12noon - 3pm for Personal Injury & Family matters. GHP Legal is authorised and regulated by the SRA 51566, and Lexcel Accredited.



Think of Brexit's global consequences

I NOTE that "Jezzer" Corbyn has briefed his troops on the ground in the regions to look out for potential areas of future development activity. New ideas to attract voters and better still young voters.

I somehow wish that we could vote for the best MP (Owen Paterson) and have a separate vote for a ruling party, (not Messers May, Gove, Davis, and Johnson). In other words vote for MPs to deal with local/regional affairs and a party for interna-

tional affairs: two separate legislatures. On an international basis your vote could go to people way outside of your constituency.

Current gripe. Mrs May thinks that the financial function, as per Brexit, will be conducted by UK companies that are UK-based.

Therefore we will have to buy into markets to operate. Mrs May these are global companies.

They go where favourable trade winds

take them. Right now Deutsche Bank are moving "jobs" to Frankfurt.

Read for that shifting international business as well as EU business away from London. In other words traders in New York will deal with traders in Frankfurt where they used to use London. Brexit is not just about UK and European business it is about aspects of globalisation.

ROBIN LLOYD
Ellesmere

They should be paying us for liberating them in wars

FRAU Merkel does not need a minister of propaganda when she has the BBC, Sky, ITV, Channel 4, The Guardian, Daily Mirror, The Observer and The Independent, that's not really independent at all.

A Remain PM and many in the cabinet who wanted us to stay in the EU should not be in positions of power.

Now the majority of us who voted Leave, yes the majority, are facing a charm offensive from Ancestry UK on their TV advertisement. The EU is nothing but a dictatorship with an unelected commission who direct policy and individual MEPs can only vote yes or no within a few seconds. The EU Commission cannot be voted out like governments in the UK if we are not satisfied with them.

Then there is the constant running down of this great nation and dismal forecasts for the future. Okay Remainers, if this country is so pathetic that we are incapable of running our own affairs, why is it that hundreds of thousands of people outside the EU, seeking asylum, make their way through from at least two to eight safe European countries to France and once there, still risk their own lives to make it to the UK? If the EU is such a wonderful place to live and work, why are there over 2.5 million Europeans working and living in the UK?

I would like to remind people that before we joined the EU Britain was booming, and if you were not in the pub before 8pm you could not get in! The only way this country will be worse off after leaving the EU is if we keep on surrendering to blackmail, by that I mean keep paying them money for being in a club that we have voted to leave. If anything they should be paying us for liberating them through two world wars.

MARK NORWOOD
Whittington

Germans have got it right on trade agreements

THE Prime Minister has been in China, talking about the strong trading relationship she will build with them post-Brexit.

She seems to forget Germany currently do much more trade with China than us, even though they are constrained by the same imaginary EU restrictions that Brexiteers want us to shake off. Putting this to one side, at least Mrs May must understand that a momentous decision needs to be made very soon - do we stay closely aligned to the EU, after Brexit, or do we break completely apart from our nearest neighbours, allies and most important trading partners? We can get a bespoke deal, but we really cannot have all our cake and eat all our cake. But, as already mentioned, Germany does not need to leave the EU in order to export far more than us. Their secret is simple, they invest in education, training and infrastructure, and they ensure that their society is more harmonious and less divided between rich and poor.

JOHN GEMMELL
Wem

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Readers' Letters,
The Chronicle,
14 Salop Road,
Oswestry, SY11 2NU

EMAIL

lain.stjohn@
shropshirestar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Another bright idea for the BBC

THE BBC have "upgraded" their online forecasts and I am happy to report they will be 100 per cent accurate from now on.

How have they achieved this?
By forecasting rain for every day over a 14 day period in Shropshire and giving a percentage chance of the wet stuff happening.

This is brilliant.
Whoever devised it should be let loose to solve the gender pay gap at the BBC, or become head of comedy.

PETER STEGGLES,
Longnor

Does Brussels want us or just to keep our cash?

ON June 23, 2016 we were given the opportunity to decide if we wished to elect a government to run our country or to have our country run from Brussels.

It was called a referendum.
Those who voted to leave the EU and were in the majority then sat back and expected the vote to be respected and our wishes to be carried out by those who were elected by us in a democratic society.

Some in power have decided to not respect the referendum vote and try to delay any move to remove us from the powers of Brussels.

To most the simple answer is you stop paying and you are out.

This does not apply to Brussels.

We give notice.

Then the politicians start to find problems.

Is it a soft or hard Brexit?

Our non-elected friends in Brussels now say we would be most welcome back.

Do they want us or just our money?

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Fine of £660 in speeding case

FAILING to respond to a speeding ticket has seen a Mid Wales man land with a £660 fine.

John Power, 21, of Leighton Arches, Welshpool, was fined by magistrates in Welshpool on Tuesday last week after being found guilty in his absence after he failed to attend court.

The magistrates court heard an allegation that Power had been clocked doing 37mph in a 30mph zone on August 3 in Churchstoke.

He failed to respond to the ticket when it was issued to him in September.

He was ordered to pay £660 by magistrates, and was handed six penalty points.

He will also pay a £66 victim surcharge and £620 prosecution costs, the court ruled.

Rare plants set to return to canal

FLOATING water plantain and other rare aquatic plants should soon be thriving again on the Montgomery Canal near Welshpool thanks to the Canal and River Trust.

Over the winter, volunteers and contractors have worked alongside trust ecologists to clear away unwanted vegetation and silt from the Guilsfield Arm which runs for two and a quarter miles from Burgedin towards the village of Guilsfield.

The Guilsfield Arm is now cut off from the canal mainline by a bridge but is being developed as a special place for nature, providing a safe, undisturbed home for some of the many aquatic plants which flourish on the Montgomery Canal.

Sara Hill, Canal and River Trust ecologist, said: "The volunteers and contractors have done an amazing job."

Mile End roundabout set for more roadworks

Report by Sue Austin

MAJOR work will be carried out on a roundabout which links two of the county's main trunk roads – just four years after a £4 million upgrade.

The Mile End roundabout in Oswestry will be altered again, with an exit being widened in a bid to improve traffic flow.

Road markings will also be redrawn after complaints from drivers who say the current layout is confusing and not in line with other roundabouts.

It comes as Highways England bosses moved to reassure people that roadworks on the busy A483/A5 route around Oswestry will be completed by the summer holidays.

Hundreds of thousands of drivers use the route to travel to the Welsh beaches every summer.

Roadworks began last week to improve the Maesbury Road junction, a recognised accident blackspot, after which contractors will return to the nearby Mile End traffic island for a new round of improvements.

James Wildman, Highways England spokesman, said: "We'll aim to ensure any disruption is kept to a minimum and would like to thank people for their patience while this takes place."

Referring to the Maesbury Road work he said: "We'll be improving the layout of the junction and installing traffic signals to smooth the flow of traffic, reduce queuing on either side of the A483 and improve safety for both pedestrians and motorists."

"An additional lane will be added in both the north and southbound directions and street lighting will also be upgraded."

New memorial for village is planned



Neil Dalrymple, pictured in his studio, is leading the memorial art project

MOST war memorials are in the shape of large crosses or plaques in the centre of towns and villages.

In the village of Pant near Oswestry the memorial is one that is used not just on Remembrance Sunday but almost every day of the year – the village hall.

Now historians, former armed forces personnel and villagers are being given the opportunity of working with a sculptor to create an artwork to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armistice and the end of the First World War.

Pant Memorial Hall is working with artist Neil Dalrymple to design the memorial artwork in collaboration with the local community. His work includes a ceramic war memorial for the community at Ffrith, in Flintshire.

Villagers can hear more about the plans at the hall committee's annual meeting this evening (Thursday) at 7pm.

Pant's Memorial Hall was set up after the First World War to be a memorial to the suffering endured by soldiers and civilians and now plays a central part in the life of the village.

The new artwork is designed to create a permanent visual memorial on the outside of the hall.

Temporary weight limit is installed on bridge

A TEMPORARY weight limit has been brought in for a bridge on a country lane after two lorries got stuck avoiding roadworks.

The closure of the Maesbury Road junction on to the A483 on the edge of Oswestry has led to a number of drivers using the nearby Weston Lane as an alternative route.

Residents have complained of unsuitable and speeding traffic using not only the lane but other local roads.

One woman walking her dog told the local councillor she was forced to press herself into a hedge when two cars tried to pass each other on the narrow lane. Improvement works on the A483 junction with Maesbury Road are being carried out by contractors working for Highways England.

The work to install traffic lights at the current staggered junction is likely to last until early June.

Shropshire Councillor Joyce Barrow said that following numerous complaints in the first weeks the council's highways team investigated and liaised with the contractor to look at solutions.

She said two lorries had become stuck on the bridge. Councillor Barrow said: "Due to the potential safety risk these solutions include a temporary weight limit being imposed on Weston Lane on an urgent basis which will be signed appropriately and monitored for the remainder of the works. On other routes, such as the road through Morda, extra safety signing is being erected and the advice to heavy goods vehicles is to follow the signed diversions in place to avoid problems. Shropshire Council staff will continue to liaise and advise on any current or ongoing issues with this work."

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Inquest told of 'unknown factors' of man's death

A MAN whose body was found at the bottom of a hill died in "unknown circumstances", an inquest into the tragedy has heard.

Jake Kendal White, from Weston Lullingfields, near Baschurch, died on November 27 last year.

The 24-year-old's body was found at the bottom of Nesscliffe Hill by a dog walker in Nesscliffe Country Park, the inquest heard.

The inquest, held at Shirehall in Shrewsbury last week, heard that Mr White's body was found at about 1.40pm on November 27 by a member of the public who called an ambulance at about 2pm.

Coroner for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, John Ellery, said he has been to the scene and estimated the hill is about 70 to 80ft high.

He said that Mr White's parents were the last people known to have seen him alive the day before.

"There is no other sitting until his deceased body was found the following afternoon," he added.

The coroner said: "We don't know the route or means of transportation from his home to Nesscliffe Hill, or how long he had been at the base of the cliff face."

The cause of Mr White's death was chest injuries due to a fall off the cliff.

Mr Ellery said there is no evidence about whether the fall was deliberate or accidental.

He said: "We simply don't know how Jake came to be at the bottom of the cliff."

"There are too many unknown factors."

Mr Ellery recorded that Jake White died in unknown circumstances.

He offered his condolences to his family.

Firm says town's oldest pub has bright future

Report by Jonny Drury

A COMPANY has insisted it is committed to re-opening Oswestry's oldest pub.

The Bell Inn on Church Street closed in January after the landlady left, with Punch Taverns on the lookout for a new publican.

The pub has been untouched for almost two months, leaving locals and regulars value the traditional pub highly and are working hard to find a new publican.

It has since been taken over by Star Pubs and Bar, which is owned by Heineken.

With locals waiting for news, management at the company have insisted they value the traditional pub highly and are working hard to find a new publican.

A spokeswoman for Star Pubs and Bars said: "We're actively looking to recruit a new licensee to take on the lease of the Bell Inn."

"It is a fabulous traditional and popular local in the centre of town."

"We are keen to see the pub open and trading again as soon as possible and in the meantime would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused."

"Anyone interested in taking on the Bell Inn should contact 08085 949596."

The pub has had a host of occupants down the years and was run for many years by former Shrewsbury Town footballer Carleton Leonard who also runs Gibson's Nightclub.

A major refurbishment of the pub took place and it was reopened in April 2016, with the establishment under new management and serving food.

The refurbishment, costing £160,000, was thanks to a joint investment between Punch and then publican Ian Leuty.

Council backing for music festival



Caroline Bradley accepts the cheque from Oswestry Mayor Vince Hunt

FOLLOWING a successful application for financial assistance from Oswestry Town Council's large grant scheme, the Mayor of Oswestry Vince Hunt has presented a cheque for £250 to Caroline Bradley, the treasurer of Whittington Music Festival, in support of an organ recital.

The recital will be held at St Oswald's Church in Oswestry at 1pm on May 17.

Whittington's sixth week-long music festival is now well established.

It has an enthusiastic audience from as far afield as London and overseas.

"A festival of this quality is only possible because of the grants and advertising it attracts," said festival chairman Rob Greaves.

Mr Greaves added: "We are especially grateful this year to Oswestry Town Council, the Walker Trust, the Lord Leverhulme Charitable Trust and the Mary Hignett Bequest Fund, as well as a whole range of local businesses including Maelor Forest Nurseries."

Further information on Whittington's music festival and about the musicians who are taking part this year can be obtained from whittingtonmusicfestival.org.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man held after police pursuit

A MAN has been arrested after a stolen van was in collision with an unmarked police car.

Police are appealing for witnesses or dashcam footage following the incident on Friday. At 8.10am, a van was reported to police as stolen from outside a property on Gittin Street in Oswestry. The vehicle was then in collision with an unmarked police vehicle on the A5, causing minor damage. There were no reported injuries.

The van was located and recovered by officers.

A 30-year-old man was arrested nearby on suspicion of aggravated theft of a motor vehicle, failing to stop for police and dangerous driving. As part of the investigation, a police helicopter and police dog handlers were in attendance in the area.

Rotary club looks for more members

OSWESTRY Cambrian Rotary Club is looking to attract new members and further expand its work in the community.

Current members are looking to dispel myths that the club is just for men or that members need to be retired or in business.

The club has issued a call to prospective members that they need to be over 18, of good character, and want to help the community and make a difference to people's lives.

An open evening is being held this evening (Thursday) at the Wynnstay Hotel in Oswestry at 7.30pm for people to go along for a coffee and a discussion.

For more information about the Cambrian Rotary Club and its work people can contact Mike Lade on (01691) 650854 or oswestrycambrian@btinternet.co.uk or go www.oswestrycambrianre.co.uk

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Seven-mile walk planned

THE Welshpool Ramblers walk on Sunday will be in the Minsterley region and led by Gerry Skinner.

The seven-mile route will be through Poles Coppice to Nill's Farm and Pontesford Hill, returning via Habberley village.

There is one steep climb and descent but much of the route is over good paths with only the occasional muddy field. Meet at 9.30am in the car park beside the Welshpool Tourist Information Centre (OS grid ref. SJ 226 075) or at the start of the walk at the Poles Coppice Car park on Callow Lane (OS grid ref. SJ 385 042) ready for a 10.15am start.

Order is given for shop thefts

A MAN has been made the subject of a community order after stealing meat products and electric toothbrushes from stores.

James William Spaul, 26, of Berriew, Welshpool, admitted two theft charges when he appeared before Welshpool Magistrates Court on Tuesday last week.

On January 10, Spaul stole Sonicare electric toothbrushes from Boots, valued at £270.

He also stole meat products from Iceland in Welshpool on February 18, the court heard.

He was ordered to pay £270 compensation to Boots and £36 to Iceland, and was made subject to a 12-month community order.

He was fined £100 and ordered to pay £85 costs and a £85 victim surcharge.

Call made for support for local bus services

Report by Jonny Drury

PEOPLE are feeling the consequences of a lack of bus services according to a politician after figures revealed the distance travelled by services has dropped 20 per cent in 10 years.

Wales's 19.5 per cent decline is 13.4 per cent more than in England, 4.4 per cent more than in Scotland, and 13.5 per cent more than in Northern Ireland.

It means that the 130 million bus journeys in 2008/09 has now fallen to 100 million journeys.

Russell George, Assembly Member for Montgomeryshire and shadow cabinet secretary for transport, said: "People across Mid Wales rely on public transport for a variety of reasons from doing their weekly shop to visiting relatives in hospital, but the drop in bus provision shouldn't come as a surprise after the significant cuts made by the Welsh Government to operator grants.

"It is a particular disappointment to see the distances travelled by buses in Wales fall so very sharply at a time when people across our country are becoming more environmentally conscious."

The Assembly Member added: "I want to see an increase in support for local bus services and have announced that we would introduce a 'green card' which would give free bus travel to all 16-24 year olds in Wales."

MP supportive of Fairtrade ideal



Montgomeryshire MP Glyn Davies with Fairtrade Wales's Ffion Storer Jones

GLYN Davies, Conservative MP for Montgomeryshire, attended a Parliamentary reception to mark the recent Fairtrade Fortnight campaign in support of Fairtrade produce.

Fairtrade Fortnight is the Fairtrade Foundation's biggest annual campaign, with campaigners across the UK raising awareness and encouraging more people to buy Fairtrade products. The campaign aims to put a spotlight on trade in order to improve the lives of farmers and workers. Mr Davies was invited to the reception by his constituent and Fairtrade Wales's project and communications co-ordinator Ffion Storer Jones.

The reception also saw speeches from industry representatives in support of Fairtrade produce, as well as Fairtrade producers from India, Sumatra, Uganda and Panama.

Mr Davies said: "It was great to meet with many Fairtrade producers from across the world, as well as representatives from Greggs and the Co-Op about why they choose to support Fairtrade as part of their businesses."

Town mayor blames high rates for loss of business

A TOWN mayor has revealed he is closing his business and says not enough is being done to help small traders.

Councillor Steve Kaye says that business rates and high rents are to blame for his decision to shut up shop in Welshpool.

He has taken the decision to close Multi-Services Wales, a business that specialises in supplying goods and services, based on Henfaes Lane.

He said both the government and unitary authorities should do more to help the small businesses that were the lifeblood of towns like Welshpool.

"There is not enough support out there for traders, whether shopkeepers in the town centre or people like myself based in industrial units," he said.

"Business rates are astronomical and rents and other overhead are high.

"You can have a good turnover but still be unable to survive."

The mayor said that his experience in trying to keep his business afloat had been an eye-opener.

He said: "Life goes on and at least this has given me an insight into the problems out there and the lack of help. I am now even more determined to fight the corner of our small businesses and press for more support.

"I shall be urging Powys council to look at how it can be more proactive and work to make life easier for the small businesses that are so important to the economy.

"I shall also continue to campaign for cuts to business rates."



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Conditions in HMP Berwyn are heavily criticised

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, March 15, 2018

A PRISON which houses inmates from Shropshire has been criticised.

During the first session of a Welsh Affairs Select Committee inquiry, Frances Crook, chief executive of the Howard League of Penal Reform Panel, gave a damning verdict of HMP Berwyn, which opened in Wrexham in February last year.

She described the design and build of the prison as "shameful" and stated it was constructed in a way that not even Victorians would build.

She said: "Our prisons are shameful and Berwyn is going to be shameful very soon. It was built in a way that not even Victorians would not build.

"These are small cells that people have to share. There are two sorts of plinths that they sleep on. There's a toilet at the end of it, so you have to defecate in front of someone.

"It is going to be the most disgusting prison in Europe within 10 years."

A Prison Service spokesperson said: "HMP Berwyn is performing well since it opened and represents a key part of our £1.3 billion investment to reform and modernise the prison estate. There has been a phased introduction of prisoners since it opened and there is no evidence to suggest larger prisons perform worse than smaller establishments."

Celebrations for students at town college

NORTH Shropshire College maths students have recently celebrated their academic success at the college's Oswestry campus.

Many of the students were overjoyed to hear that they had passed their entry level maths exams with flying colours after months of hard work and preparation.

In addition to their recent achievements, the students have continued on their path to academic success by preparing for their upcoming level one maths exams, using their weekly lessons to work together and improve their knowledge of their times tables.

Jo Millington, curriculum area manager for maths and English at the college, said: "We are delighted with the results that the students have achieved so far this academic year.

"It has been great to see the students engaging with the course, and realising their full potential, and we hope that they will continue on the path to success in the future."

For more information about maths and English courses at North Shropshire College, or to apply for courses starting in September this year, visit www.nsc.ac.uk or call the admissions team on (01691) 688080.

Group launches fundraising drive

AN organisation tackling the stigma around mental health has held a cake sale and launched a fundraising campaign.

Designs in Mind in Oswestry is changing how people access support for mental health issues.

It is a working studio where adults living with mental illness join the studio as a member of the team, making and designing commissioned artwork and products for retail. Now a new venture has seen its first shop, Jolt, open in Oswestry, to make conversations about mental health every day, and to be a place where people can go to get support.

Alongside this a campaign has been launched, called #SmashingStigma, with a cake sale also held called "The Depressed Cake Shop".

The organisation said: "We want to start a conversation about mental health that is powerful. No more treading on eggshells. We are not invisible and we do not want to be hidden away anymore.

"Eighty per cent of leaders in NHS trusts fear they will have too little money to provide timely, high quality care to people seeking mental health support."

The campaign is aiming to raise £40,000 to pay for the lease and overheads of the Jolt shop for the next three years.

Council's highways teams are working 'flat out' to repair hundreds of potholes on roads

Report by Lucy Todman

been ordered from its contractor for March, utilising additional pothole funding received from central government.

Councillor Steve Davenport, Shropshire Council's Cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "We recognise that residents are concerned about the number of potholes appearing on our roads and we're working flat out throughout the county to address the problem on a priority basis. Unfortunately, repeated fluctuations in weather conditions – from above to below freezing – coupled with heavy rainfall, create the worst possible conditions for road surfaces, and result in an increase in the num-

ber of potholes. This is a problem that many other local authorities are also facing.

"I want people to be aware that we are working each day to address this problem, but also ask them to help us by reporting any potholes that they spot.

"We carry out regular inspections of the roads but potholes can happen very fast, and with over 5,000 kilometres of roads, cycleways, footpaths and verges in Shropshire we also rely on such reports so that we can ensure all potholes are treated."

As cold and wet weather conditions are not always conducive to carrying out effective and lasting repairs, some of the work carried out is of a temporary nature.

The bulk of the council's annual road repair

budget is invested in the summer months when working conditions are better, and longer lasting repairs can be carried out.

From April 1 Shropshire Council's new highways contractor, Kier, will take on responsibility for repairing road defects – including pothole repair, resurfacing, surface dressing and patching – and will immediately begin work at a number of sites that have already been identified as requiring work.

Potholes are categorised according to a national standard of acceptable road surface quality. To report a pothole go to shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/report-a-fault-or-concern/

If a pothole has been outlined with paint it has already been inspected and programmed to be fixed, so doesn't need to be reported.

Report by Jonny Drury

INDIE pop band the Kaiser Chiefs have been announced as the headline act for the finale of this year's Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod.

The band will perform at Llanfest, the event that closes the eisteddfod, on Sunday, July 8 in the north Wales town.

The show will be the band's first Welsh gig in almost two years – and they will be joined on the bill by pop rock band The Hoosiers and 90s icons Toploader.

Chairman of the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod Dr Rhys Davies said: "The International Eisteddfod was created to heal the wounds of war and bring communities from across the globe together through music and dance, in the spirit of international friendship and peace.

"Llanfest was introduced to spread this message to a wider audience, by bringing new and more contemporary music genres to the festival, while still remaining true to its traditional values.

Adventure

"Kaiser Chiefs are renowned not just for their guitar-based indie hits, but also their spirit of musical adventure and re-invention, most recently with their foray into pop with Stay Together.

"Adding to that mix two iconic bands from the 2000s whose upbeat indie pop hits resonate across generations, the day is certain to bring thousands together to enjoy a high-energy finale to our 2018 festival."

Llanfest is a recent addition to the event, which is usually renowned for its choral music, opera galas and classical concerns, as well as world music, jazz, rhythm and blues and folk music performances.

It was launched in 2011 to introduce the event to new audiences and attract festival-goers from across the UK.

The announcement of the Kaiser Chiefs follows the success of legendary Welsh band Manic Street Preachers, who raised the roof of the pavilion at the festival finale last year.

The band, who originate from Leeds and are fronted by Ricky Wilson, will be playing some of their top tracks including "I Predict a Riot" and "Ruby". The concert will see the pavilion's rear seating once again being removed to increase capacity to more than 5,200, making it one of the festival's biggest ever gigs.

Health hero Ben praised for 'delivering results'



Ben Rowley receives his Health Hero Award from Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital's chief executive Mark Brandreth

AN information systems analyst who "demonstrates the trust values whilst delivering results" has won a Health Hero Award at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital.

Ben Rowley works in the information department at the hospital and has won the monthly award after being nominated by Amanda Peet and Nicki Bellinger for his work on the new theatre dashboard.

The dashboard is a web-based report which gives up-to-date information about theatre utilisation. This means people can interact with the report to get the data they need when they

need it, rather than having to request a report and wait for it.

Amanda, clinical services manager, said: "He's extremely committed to the ongoing development of the theatre dashboard and his ability to translate requests to demonstrate utilisation is outstanding."

Nicki, deputy director of nursing, added: "His assistance in the development and continuity of the theatre dashboard has been extremely valuable."

His award was presented to him by chief executive Mark Brandreth.

Two other members of staff, Andy Hughes, senior information systems analyst, and Danni Clarke, IT developer, were also praised by Mark for their ongoing hard work with the trust's new data warehouse, which the theatre dashboard has been built into.

Andy and Danni have spent a great deal of time building the foundations of this new warehouse which extracts data from different systems and imports it into tables that can be used for reporting. Thanks to their hard work the trust is hoping to switch all reporting to this system in the coming months.

Flats plan is given the go-ahead after council vote

A CONTROVERSIAL application to build 17 flats on the site of a former social club has been narrowly approved by planners.

The application was met by strong objections by residents, and after a level vote for and against in a planning meeting in Welshpool, a vote for the development by chair David Evans led to the application being narrowly approved.

The application was submitted in 2017 by Mid Wales Properties on behalf of Mid Wales Housing Association to demolish the former Welshpool Social Club, and build 19 flats.

The plans were amended to 17 flats, however Welshpool Town Council opposed the plans following a public meeting in the town with around 20 local residents attending.

Developers amended their plans ahead of the meeting of the planning committee.

A host of representations were made at the meeting in Welshpool on Thursday last week, including from Councillor Graham Breeze, who has been strongly against this development and told the planning committee that highway safety, access, the size of the development and

impact on surrounding properties were good reasons to refuse the development.

He said: "The very unsuitable road leading to the upper part of the development is already a constant source of problems.

"Access for emergency services is already a major concern on this estate road, and I would ask the committee to recognise this risk to safety this development will cause."

Simon Barry, agent on behalf of Mid Wales Properties, argued the site is in a bad state of repair, and structural problems deterred pro-

spective buyers. He said that due to the bad state of the building the site was suitable for the housing development.

He also argued no parking problems would be caused and Powys had a shortage of homes.

Planners recommended the application for conditional approval.

A vote was taken and there was six for and six against.

Chair of the committee, Councillor Evans, had voted for the recommendation, and his vote led to conditional approval being given

More than 1,100 referrals are made after parents' drink and drug misuse reported

A RECORD number of people have contacted the NSPCC Helpline with concerns about children whose parents were binge drinking or taking drugs – and more than 1,100 referrals were made in Shropshire and the West Midlands in the space of a year.

New figures show that in 2016/17 the children's charity received 10,207 calls and emails – on average almost 200 a week – about parental substance misuse, which is a 30 per cent increase on 2015/16.

Of these, 8,793 involved more than 15,000 children and were deemed serious enough to be referred on to local authorities or the police.

In the West Midlands – including Shropshire – 1,101 contacts were referred to local authorities or the police in 2016/17.

Report by Lisa O'Brien

The majority of contacts to the NSPCC Helpline about substance misuse are from members of the public worried that a parent is drinking too much alcohol, which in turn is affecting their ability to provide a safe and supportive environment for their children.

Emotional

In many of these cases other concerns such as neglect and physical and emotional abuse against the child, parental domestic abuse and parental mental health issues are also raised.

More than a third of the children referred to police or local authorities across the UK were

aged between one and five, with a further 581 being less than a year old – including unborn children.

To support families where parental substance misuse is present and causing a problem, the NSPCC delivers "parents under pressure" at its Coventry service centre, among other locations in the UK.

It is a home-based programme originally designed and tested in Australia.

Together with the University of Warwick, the NSPCC published an evaluation of the programme recently.

The study revealed that those receiving the programme had showed a number of improvements to their behaviour in the family home.

The risk of child abuse had decreased and

had been sustained six months later. NSPCC West Midlands head of service, Sandra McNair, said: "Every child should be able to grow up in a home where they feel safe and supported. The sad fact is that many young people are being deprived of this simple right due to one or both of their parents abusing drink and drugs.

"Adults who are misusing any substance can seek help from effective programmes such as parents under pressure, for the wellbeing of their whole family. In doing so they will be encouraged to gain a better understanding of themselves and be supported to achieve changes in their lives that will help them meet their children's needs."

The NSPCC's Helpline is available on 0800 800 5000 or via help@nspcc.org.uk

Canal restoration team is looking for project manager

Report by Sue Austin

PLANS for the next stages of the restoration of the Montgomery Canal mean an opportunity for a paid project manager for the building of a new bridge.

The new bridge, on the way to Crickheath on the Shropshire side of the canal, will remove one of the major blockages that can pave the way for the complete restoration of the canal from Newtown to the junction with the Llangollen canal near Ellesmere.

Already £160,000 has been raised, more than half the expected cost of the volunteer-led construction.

Michael Limbrey, chairman of the Montgomery Waterway Restoration Trust, said: "This is possibly the most exciting project in the long history of volunteers working to restore the Montgomery Canal. A qualified volunteer has been working on the design for some months and we now need someone to help carry those plans into effect."

He said the new bridge, a prefabricated segmented concrete arch, will be built with skilled volunteers to reduce costs to a level where the bridge works could be funded.

He said: "We expect construction could take six months and we expect that the preparation could take up to 12 months. We are keen to press on as soon as help can be arranged."

"This is a role that would suit someone retired or in the process of winding down their working life. We envisage a part-time position which could be largely conducted at home so the successful applicant would not have to live in the area."

"We are looking for someone with experience in civil engineering project management who would be able to work with varied skills and abilities. Many of our volunteers will have long experience of working on the Montgomery Canal or on other canal projects across the country, and are qualified to operate the machines they need, some of which are very big."

"Our project manager will work with a team undertaking the restoration under the supervision of the Montgomery Canal Partnership and will also have to ensure the bridge meets the requirements of the highway authority and the Canal & River Trust who own the canal."

Anyone interested in the position is invited to contact John Dodwell, chair, Montgomery Canal Partnership at john.dodwell@rolandon.com or 07802 961485.

Students show off their skills at championships



North Shropshire College students Kathryn Peake, Kelly Jones and Zak Owen celebrate their success at the championships

OSWESTRY'S North Shropshire College hospitality and catering students recently enjoyed a trip to the Welsh Culinary Championships to test their cooking skills and impress competition judges with their talents.

Students across level one, two and three courses at the college took part in the championships, alongside many other junior and senior chefs and waiting staff who head to the competition every year.

The students thoroughly impressed the judges with their skills, and came away from

the competition with two certificates of merits, four silver medals and a best in class award for culinary vegetable cuts.

Sharon Cooper, curriculum area manager for commercial services, said: "We are delighted with the results achieved by the students at the championships."

"It's a credit to the hard work of the hospitality and catering students, and the members of staff that support them, that we have been able to obtain such successes."

At the championships Kathryn Peake re-

ceived two silver medals and best in class for knife skill. Kelly Jones won a silver medal and a certificate of merit and Zak Owen won a silver medal and a certificate of merit.

Zak Owen, a level one professional cookery student, said: "I found it a really rewarding experience and I was chuffed to win a silver medal and a certificate of merit for my knife skills."

For more information about hospitality and catering courses at North Shropshire College people can visit www.nsc.ac.uk

Child death fee is scrapped by local authority

COUNCILLORS in Powys have voted unanimously to waive fees for registering a stillbirth and the deaths of children up to the age of 18.

Earlier this year the Welsh Government scrapped child burial fees and now Powys County Council has followed suit.

At a full council meeting, County Councillor Gareth Radcliffe put forward a notice of motion, seconded by Councillor Pete Roberts, which stated: "We call on Powys County Council to waive all costs for registering a stillbirth, the death of a baby who died before their birth was registered, as well as for all other under 18s."

The Government has made £1.5 million available until 2020 to support local authorities so that burial fees and cremation fees for children could be scrapped in Wales with immediate effect.

Councillor Radcliffe added in his motion: "Sadly fees for registering the deaths of children has not been scrapped as part of this and remain a statutory fee."

"In light of this we call on Powys County Council to follow Ceredigion County Council and waive these fees."

Councillors at the meeting voted unanimously to waive the fees, with Councillor Jonathan Wilkinson stating that only a "callous" authority wouldn't support the motion.

Council tops carbon saving league table

POWYS County Council has become the leading carbon saving council in all of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Powys County Council received the Local Authority Recycling Carbon Index Trophy from Eunomia after it topped the carbon index league for achieving a carbon saving of 130kg per person in 2015/16.

Eunomia's index calculates the amount of carbon dioxide emissions that are prevented as a result of local residents' recycling efforts.

The council also showed the biggest year-on-year improvement, according to the index, jumping from 103kg of carbon saved per person in 2014/15 to 130kg in the last financial year.

Councillor Phyl Davies, cabinet member for waste and recycling, said: "To be the leading recycling carbon-saving council in all of England, Northern Ireland and Wales is a great achievement."

"We're very proud of what local residents have helped us achieve and I would like to thank them for their efforts in getting us to the top spot, we couldn't have done it without them."

"The result shows that the effort that residents and our staff make to separate waste at source really pays dividends when it comes to producing carbon savings."

Brexit 'will let farmers prosper'

BREXIT will give Welsh farmers the chance to prosper in the future according to NFU Cymru.

President John Davies addressed industry stakeholders and fellow members during an NFU Cymru session with Welsh Government at the annual NFU Conference at the ICC in Birmingham.

As part of his address in one of his first major engagements as NFU Cymru president, John Davies used the 'Welsh Agriculture: Embracing Change for Success' session to emphasise the importance of the UK Government securing a deal with the EU27 that enables farming in Wales to prosper.

He said: "The £7bn Welsh food and farming industry is heavily reliant on free and frictionless trade with our nearest neighbour and this must remain following our departure from the EU in March 2019."

"In terms of securing a bright future for this industry we need a future policy for Wales that supports our primary role as food producers whilst also caring for and enhancing our environment and landscapes. We are asking for an integrated strategy that acknowledges food production and the full range of ecosystem and landscape services provided by the Welsh farming industry."

Money advice in villages thanks to lottery grant

PEOPLE living in three neighbouring villages near Oswestry can gain valuable money matters advice thanks to a lottery grant.

Since the launch of My Money Matters last year, 42 people in Weston Rhyn, Gobowen and St Martins have received support from the Citizens Advice Shropshire-led service.

It is being funded in the area until 2020 by Three Parishes Big Local as part of its £1 million Big Lottery investment in the three villages.

From April the project will run evening

drop-in sessions for those unable to attend daytime events.

Karen Williams, the project's community adviser, said that the information and advice had had many positive outcomes including helping people access benefits that they are entitled to.

"It has helped people with issues ranging from benefit applications, Blue Badge applications, debt advice, homelessness, energy advice, state pension, and tenancy agreements," she said.

"It's fantastic to be able to deliver a holistic

and flexible service in the three parishes area, providing support within the communities on virtually any topic and helping people find a way forward.

"My Money Matters is for anyone who lives, works or volunteers in the villages."

She added: "This will be a year of changes for Shropshire and My Money Matters – from April we'll be running evening drop-in sessions for those who work or are unable to come in during the day."

"The service will also continue its regular

presence at local GP surgeries and the Jobcentre Plus in Oswestry. Full service Universal Credit comes to Shropshire in May and we'll be on hand to help people get to grips with the changes and navigate the new benefit through workshop sessions and one-to-one support."

Pat McGuinness, Three Parishes Big Local Partnership member, said: "We are really pleased that My Money Matters is making a difference, and it is great to hear that the project has worked with local people to access a potential £40,000 of additional income."

14 Motorists are told to expect delays on A483

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, March 15, 2018

MOTORISTS are set to face two months of tail backs and traffic congestion on the main road running through Powys.

Work has begun on the A483 north of Abermule to strengthen the 120-year-old Glan Hafren Bridge.

The Canal and River Trust is refurbishing the bridge to ensure it remains safe to use and its heritage value is maintained.

Traffic lights have been installed for the works and will be in place 24 hours a day.

David Jones of the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency said: "A lane closure under temporary traffic light control is required on the A483 to allow space for a construction plant to demolish and re-build the existing bridge deck, and to allow residents safe access to their homes whilst the works are being carried out.

"These temporary traffic lights will be up 24 hours a day but will be under manual control during peak times from 7am to 9am and 3.30pm to 6.30pm, to help manage the build-up of queues. However some delay in journey time between Newtown and Welshpool is inevitable. The traffic lights will be removed ahead of Easter weekend but will go up again after."

Work to the bridge will see the existing stone and timber deck removed and replaced by a concrete deck with new steel beams.

Membership honour for top engineer

A MID Wales engineer has been awarded a membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers which represents 92,000 civil engineers across the world.

Catherine Owens from Welshpool currently works as a civil engineer for Atkins and excelled in maths at school, and was attracted to a civil engineering career.

ICE's professionally qualified grades of membership are internationally recognised and highly valued, and Catherine, who has met all the requirements of the ICE's Chartered Professional Review, is now entitled to adopt the Institution's protected title of Chartered Civil Engineer.

She was presented with her membership certificate by ICE President Lord Robert Mair at a special ceremony held at ICE's headquarters in Westminster, London.

In addition to this recent career highlight, Catherine, who now works in Lichfield, said that other memorable experiences included a project she worked on in London, next to the new American Embassy. Molly McKenzie, ICE West Midlands regional director, said: "Achieving Chartered Civil Engineer status is a significant personal and career achievement and I congratulate Catherine on her success. She joins ICE as a member at a significant time – our bicentenary year."

College teacher earns doctorate

A SOCIOLOGY and psychology teacher is celebrating earning a doctorate in social anthropology.

Doctor Jack Hunter teaches Access to Higher Education sociology and psychology at Oswestry's North Shropshire College.

He achieved his doctorate after seven years of ethnographic research on spirit mediums at the University of Bristol.

He studied anomalous experiences and influence on models of consciousness and self-concepts.

He wrote a book about the psychology behind spirits, gods and magic.

Dr Hunter has also edited several other pieces of work.

He said: "I am very pleased to finally have received my doctorate, and I enjoyed the research that I have carried out at the University of Bristol."

"I am looking forward to continuing my lecturing career at North Shropshire College, and furthering my academic achievements in the years to come."

For more information on Dr Hunter and his academic studies, visit jack-hunter.webstarts.com

For further details on North Shropshire College and the courses available to take, people are asked to visit its website at nsc.ac.uk

Number of child sex offence incidents reported to police rise to record high

THE number of child sex offences recorded by police rose to a record high last year – with figures in the West Mercia force area up by 14 per cent.

In the neighbouring Dyfed-Powys force area the increase rocketed by 63 per cent.

The figures, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, showed that 1,786 cases of child sex abuse were reported to West Mercia Police during 2016/17.

This was up from 1,569 the previous year.

A total of 512 crimes in West Mercia were recorded against children aged 10 and under, while 137 of these crimes were perpetrated against children four and under.

The internet also appears to be playing a growing role in the number of offences com-

Report by Jonny Drury

mitted. Last year, some 213 offences recorded by West Mercia Police were flagged as having an online element – an increase of 87 per cent compared to the previous year.

The figures reflect a national trend, which saw the total number of recorded sex offences against children rise to a record 64,667 last year, according to the figures obtained by the NSPCC.

This marked a 15 per cent increase on the year before – with an offence recorded on average every eight minutes.

Crimes recorded in West Mercia include rape, sexual assault and grooming – with eight

offences recorded against babies aged one or younger.

But the NSPCC said the real figures are likely to be much higher, as many children may not have come forward out of fear or embarrassment.

Some may not even realise they have been abused, the charity added. Peter Wanless, NSPCC chief executive, said: "This dramatic rise is extremely concerning and shows just how extensive child sexual abuse is.

"These abhorrent crimes can shatter a child's life, leaving them to feel humiliated, depressed, or even suicidal.

"That is why it is crucial every single child who has endured abuse and needs support must get timely, thorough help so they can

learn to rebuild their lives." Mr Wanless said the increase suggested that those affected were now more confident in going to the police.

"These new figures suggest the police are making real progress in how they investigate sex offences against children," he said.

Superintendent Richard Long said: "The statistics presented by the NSPCC show a rise in the number of reports of sex offences against under-18s in 2016/17 compared to the year before.

"A fairly similar rise is seen among adults too, so we believe it's a strong indicator that people of all ages are feeling more empowered and confident than ever before to report such incidents, which include historical sex offences."

Report by Jonny Drury

NETWORK Rail has requested £20,000 from a developer who is planning to build more than 30 homes in a village near Oswestry.

An application was submitted earlier this year by the Derwen College in Gobowen to build a 33-home development on land off Southlands Avenue.

The homes will be next to the college which caters for students with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Network Rail has submitted its comments to Shropshire Council's planning department.

The rail firm says it has no objection to the application.

But it states that due to the close proximity of the nearby footpath crossing the railway line through the village, and the increased usage of the footpath, it would ask for a sum in the region of £20,000 to improve the safety of the crossing.

Proximity

A letter to the council planners from Barbara Morgan, town planning technician for Western and Wales, said: "Whilst there is no objection in principle to this proposal, due to the close proximity of the nearby public footpath crossing, and the envisaged increase in usage of the crossing Network Rail would request a contribution from the developer to improve safety measures at the crossing.

"These would include enhancing the crossing surface, trespass guards and lighting.

"These works would need to be scoped and priced more accurately but would be in the region of approximately £20,000 to upgrade the crossing surface with ambient lighting and install trespass guards."

When the application was first submitted, it was met with a string of objections from local residents.

Valerie Francis, who lives on Southlands Avenue, believes the planning documents show no concern to what she describes will be a "huge increase" in traffic along Whittington Road.

She said: "It would appear that the new management of The Derwen has not given any consideration to their own residents in that they will have to compete with the large increase in vehicle traffic, at least another 30 vehicles and many more pedestrians through the avenue."

The application is set to be considered by Shropshire Council's planning committee in April.

Hospital doing its bit in major research scheme



Some of the patients taking part in the programme with members of Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital's neuromuscular team

OSWESTRY Orthopaedic Hospital has enlisted nearly 200 patients as part of the 100,000 Genomes Project – a Government funded programme using genetics to help improve knowledge and treatment of rare diseases.

The hospital's neuromuscular team and sarcoma team between them have managed to recruit 180 patients and submit their samples.

The 100,000 Genomes Project is led regionally by the West Midlands Medicine Centre. The project sees samples of DNA taken from consenting patients, which are then sequenced to look for genes relating to diseases such as

muscular dystrophy and rare forms of cancer. Scientists and medical professionals can then use this information to further their understanding of rare conditions. Some patients might get diagnoses where there previously wasn't one, as well as the potential for individually targeted therapies.

The hospital signed up to join the project in 2016 and ran its first families clinic last year.

Speaking ahead of the first family clinic of 2018, Dr Tracey Willis, paediatric neuromuscular consultant, said: "I'm thrilled with the trust's overall performance as part of the

100,000 Genomes Project. The fact that between the neuromuscular team and the sarcoma team we've recruited almost 200 patients is fantastic.

"I've found that our monthly family clinics really help with the numbers we're seeing, for example if we saw 36 families over say three clinics, that could potentially mean more than 100 patients in total. I'm proud to be part of the 100,000 Genomes Project because it means potentially we can get an answer for those patients who haven't been diagnosed yet, or at the very least rule more conditions out."

Men On The Gates website preview given to rotarians

MEMBERS of Oswestry Rotary Club have received a preview of a new website documenting the lives of over 300 men from the First World War remembered on the Oswestry War Memorial Gates at Cae Glas Park.

Scheme co-ordinator John Davies from the Qube-led project Men On The Gates was the speaker at the club recently.

Backed by a Heritage Lottery grant, the stories of the lives of the First World War casualties have been researched and recorded to remember their sacrifice and preserve their

memory for future generations. Mr Davies invited rotary members to recall names of any family members listed on the gates to demonstrate the Men on the Gates' new interactive website and immediately found the two uncles named by rotary member Mike Jones.

Mr Davies was able to dig down beyond their dates to find out where they lived, worked and how they became casualties.

"Information can be accessed in three main ways: Men on the Gates, Men at the Front and Men at Home." Mr Davies explained. "This is

a comprehensive heritage resource documenting Oswestry's role in the conflict, providing links to external sites such as the National Archives."

The men listed on the gates came from many different walks of life and backgrounds with connections between them including being relations, school friends, work colleagues, neighbours or members of the same church and all of these links can be examined on the website.

Rotary members were keen to find out more about their own connections with the Men on

the Gates. However time for questions ran out so Mr Davies invited them to explore the website for themselves at menonthegates.org.uk.

The website launches officially on Thursday next week with an event from 7pm at The Qube where stories of the men who made the ultimate sacrifice will be heard including a talk on the "Oswestry Pals", a website demonstration and a Q&A session.

Rotarian Wagih El Masri thanked Mr Davies for the presentation and commended the project.

Town has a great community spirit

15
Oswestry & Border Chronicle
Thursday, March 15, 2018

Commercial feature

The popular and historic town of Llanfyllin is well known for its warm welcome and its picturesque countryside.

Its many independent traders take pride in the personal service they provide to visitors and locals alike.

The town boasts a wide selection of independent traders happy to help customers with their requirements and inquiries.

Part of the draw of the town is its location in Mid Wales and its fascinating history.

The town lies in the valley of the River Cain near the Berwyn Mountains in Montgomeryshire. Llanfyllin has an intriguing history and is known for its holy well, Fynnon Coed y Llan.

The well is dedicated to Saint Myllin, who is reputed to have baptised people here in the sixth century.

The parish church is also dedicated to Saint Myllin. The medieval motte and bailey castle of Tomen yr Allt was probably destroyed by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1257. The castle earthworks are still present.

Llanfyllin was granted a charter as a market town in 1293 by Llywelyn ap Dafydd under Edward I, one of only two Welsh towns to have received its charter from a native ruler.

The charter was confirmed by Edward de Charlton, Lord of Powys under Henry V.

Today Llanfyllin remains a busy town and is popular with tourists from a wide area who are keen to stay in the area to enjoy its beautiful landscapes.

Many tourists stop in Llanfyllin for a few days on their way to the Welsh coast while others spend longer in the area to enjoy all that it offers.

Another major draw for visitors is the Llanfyllin Workhouse, known as Y Dolydd.

Built in 1837, this imposing stone building served as a workhouse for up to 250 inmates



The town of Llanfyllin sits in the glorious Mid Wales countryside and has a fascinating history

until 1930, when it became a local authority institution and later a care home.

It finally closed in 1983.

The Workhouse enjoyed a brief period of rejuvenation as an outdoor pursuits centre, before being left empty from the mid 1980s.

The historic yet rather austere buildings

remained empty and derelict until local residents formed a charitable body to save the buildings, eventually taking full ownership in 2008.

Work began soon after, clearing the site and preparing to renovate led by local volunteers as well as visitors from afar.



The campaign to save the Lonely Tree was a great example of community spirit

in storms. The tree had stood over the town for generations and residents and former residents of Llanfyllin were saddened to hear of its demise. A campaign was launched by the community to try to save it and that community effort later saw the tree named Welsh Tree of the Year by The Woodland Trust.



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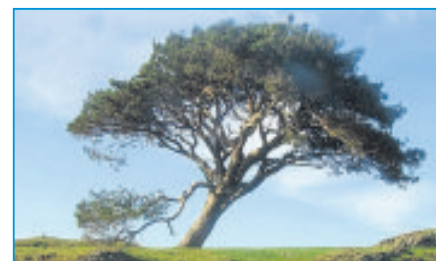
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Town police station will remain open

COUNCILLORS and residents have been given assurances from a police commissioner that a rural police station near Welshpool will remain open.

Llanfyllin's Police Station, which covers the largest area in Powys, serves a host of other towns and villages in the north of the county.

In the past it has been under threat, but on a recent visit to Llanfyllin, Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Commissioner Dafydd Llywellyn assured the town it would keep its station.

In a meeting over rural crime he committed to the future of the station, to the delight of local County Councillor Peter Lewis. The councillor said: "It is great news, because this is a station that has been under threat for years despite covering the largest area in the county."

"He has also committed to keeping the numbers in Llanfyllin, having two police community support officers and three police officers."

"It is great news for the town and a relief for people in the area."

Rural stations across the county have been under threat in recent years under the previous commissioner.

Councillor Lewis also invited the commissioner to visit the town's station, and believes it needs a makeover. He added: "I told the commissioner that it needs sprucing up really, bringing into the 21st century. He went along to see for himself, and he agreed that it does need some work done to it so hopefully it can happen."

Apology over renal unit's consultation

AN apology has been issued to patients of a renal unit over claims they were left out of a decision that could see the services privatised.

It emerged earlier this year that the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, which runs the renal unit at Welshpool's Victoria Memorial Hospital, could turn private.

Patients who attend the unit, which provides kidney dialysis for people, have been left fearing for the future of the service, and had been left in the dark about what has happened.

Montgomeryshire MP Glyn Davies and health campaigner Councillor Joy Jones expressed their concerns about the matter, and called for more information to be released.

Now renal services manager Toni Hamlett has written to patients explaining the situation.

Currently the health board is exploring a range of options that will produce the best model and best value for money.

In a letter to patients she said: "I apologise that as a group of services users within the renal unit in Welshpool you feel left out of process we are currently going through. We aim to ensure that there is continuous engagement with patients and the wider public when we are redeveloping services, I am sorry you have had to raise concerns."

Motorist banned over drug-driving

A MAN has been given a fine and driving ban after admitting driving while under the influence of cocaine.

Nathan Edgington, 26, of Llanerfyl, Welshpool, drove on Mount Road in Llanfair Caereinion, on January 7, while having 582 micrograms per litre of Benzoyllecgonine in his system, which is the main metabolite of cocaine.

He pleaded guilty to the charge at Welshpool Magistrates on Tuesday last week, and a further charge of driving with 40 micrograms per litre in his blood.

He was banned from driving by magistrates for 12 months, fined £150, ordered to pay costs of £85 and a £30 victim surcharge.

There were no cheers in Shropshire for the one that got away



German prisoners of war at Oswestry in 1919. Postcard from the collection of Ray Farlow.

IN an audacious escape, a young officer being held a prisoner-of-war tunnelled to freedom and made it all the way back home.

He even found time to write a cheeky letter thanking his captors.

But in Shropshire he will not have been considered a hero. For the military authorities in the county it is more likely that they were simply embarrassed. Because this "home run" was by a German officer being held a prisoner-of-war in Shropshire.

The story of the escape of Lieutenant F.P. Schreinuller is told as part of a new book called

Fortress Salopia. One of the chapters tells of the military presence in Shropshire in the 20th century, which included the landlocked county's role as an ideal location for prisoner-of-war camps during the Great War. Lt Schreinuller – there are different spellings of his name – made his escape from Park Hall POW Hospital, near Oswestry, in March 1919. With a formal peace treaty still unsigned, thousands of Germans were still held in captivity despite the Armistice of November 1918. According to a brief local press report at the time, Schreinuller was 21, 5ft 9ins tall, and spoke English fluently, a

factor which would obviously have been a great help while on the run.

Professor Tim Jenkins quotes in the book from a story in The Times of April, 1919 which revealed what happened: "The Shropshire police have been informed that Lieutenant F.P. Schreinuller, a young German officer, who escaped from a Prisoners of War Hospital at Park Hall Camp, Oswestry, during a snowstorm in March by tunnelling, got away from this country on board a ship conveying repatriated German prisoners to their country."

"Schreinuller, who speaks English fluently,

had written to say that he had arrived safely at Rotterdam after a pleasant voyage, and expressed thanks for the kind treatment he had received at Park Hall Camp, of which, he said, he would ever have lively recollections." Professor Jenkins writes: "The Oswestry Prisoner of War Camp was actually named Mile House or Camp 8. It is likely that Schreinuller was receiving treatment at the neighbouring Park Hall Camp which opened in 1915 for the training and dispatch of troops to the front."

Fortress Salopia is published by Helion and Company and costs £25

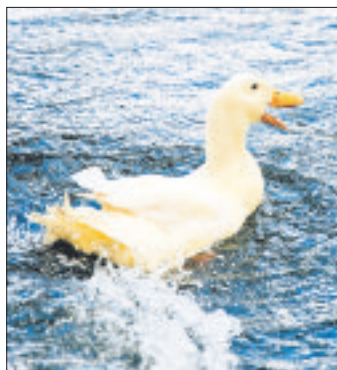


Park Hall prisoner of war camp in the Great War. Picture: Mark Hignett/Oswestry Museum.

Mr Pink feels like the king of the castle in new home



He's off – Mr Pink spots his new home and heads for the moat



He's in – Mr Pink makes a big splash



Lili Salesbury, Mr Pink, headteacher Lucy Luke and Jessica Porlock

Report by Sue Austin

MR Pink has taken to his new home like a duck to water.

The Peking duck was released in the grounds of Whittington Castle near Oswestry, and immediately headed for the moat – and to meet the other resident ducks and moorhens.

He was one of several that children at Gobowen Primary School hatched from eggs earlier this year.

"They watched them grow from ducklings and enjoyed seeing them in the school grounds until they grew too big."

The ducks were taken to a new homes but the drake, Mr Pink, didn't settle in.

Castle manager, Sue Ellis, said: "The Gobowen School ducks were rehomed but Mr Pink failed to settle."

"The school contacted us and we were only too pleased to offer him a new home."

"At the moment he really does seem to have taken to the moat well, like a duck to water."

Gobowen Primary School headteacher Lucy Luke said: "The children hatched five of the six ducks that we had from a specialist company and they lived in the classroom for about four weeks, enjoying going for a run on the playground."

"We designed lessons around them, from weighing them for maths to learning about ducks and the differences from other birds."

Mrs Luke paid tribute to the care given to the ducks by pupils Lili Salesbury and Jessica Porlock.

She said: "Lili and Jessica were wonderful, looking after them and clearing them out regularly."



Mr Pink seems happy enough in his new home



Mr Pink has made many new friends at Whittington Castle's moat



Lili Salesbury and Jessica Porlock say their farewells to Mr Pink

Campaigners' claims about the running of maternity service are described as 'not true'

THE boss of Shropshire's two main hospitals has branded a claims made by campaigners over maternity care in the county as "untrue" and "nonsense".

An open letter was sent out by health campaigners calling for a "halt to cuts that will place lives at risk", amid fears over the planned changes to rural maternity care which could see births stop at the units in Ludlow, Oswestry and Bridgnorth.

The letter, signed by 559 people, was sent to Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), which runs the midwife-led units (MLUs), and Shropshire clinical commissioning group, which has proposed a shake-up in the county's maternity services.

Report by Lisa O'Brien

The letter claims that women do want to give birth at their local MLUs but their choice is being taken away by repeated temporary closures.

It also claims that SaTH reduced the number of midwives working at Telford's consultant led unit from 2015 and 2017 and the newly recruited midwives are now not experienced enough to work on their own in a rural MLU.

In a letter responding to the claims, chief executive of SaTH, Simon Wright, said it was "simply not true" that SaTH has been trying to close the rural MLUs down since 2016 as

part of a "package of cuts". He said: "The current maternity tariff, which is the national system which funds our maternity service, is based on activity, with the money following the mum."

"To suggest that closing the rural MLUs would significantly improve the trust's financial standing is nonsense."

"There has been no money removed from our maternity services which we actually run at a loss of approximately £2 million-a-year." He also refuted claims that SaTH reduced the number of midwives working at the consultant-led unit between 2015 and 2017, saying they instead grew from 193 in 2015 to 211 in 2017.

Mr Wright said claims that newly qualified midwives were deliberately recruited to save money were "untrue and lacking any substance whatsoever".

He said: "The recruitment campaign that we undertook last year was, in fact, designed to over-recruit to our overall staffing levels in order to address sickness absence, maternity leave and actual vacancies. The recruitment of newly qualified midwives is something the trust undertakes every year, separate to the over-recruitment issue, in order to support the development of skills and competencies of those newly qualified midwives. This national approach known as preceptorship is used by all maternity services in the UK."

Process for health trust partner delayed

THE process to find a new partner for a health trust running community hospitals and services in Shropshire has been delayed.

Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust is expected to be acquired by another organisation this year.

Two trusts are in the frame – Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust and South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

A final decision was expected to be taken at a trust board meeting later this month but the trust has revealed it will now be delayed.

The process is being led by NHS Improvement, but the regulator has now asked for more time to evaluate the submissions made by the two organisations on the shortlist. Mike Ridley, chairman of Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust, said: "We have always been clear that this was all about doing the right thing for the long-term – and that we need to be part of something bigger if we are to sustain, to develop and to grow community services in the future. We need to partner that is robust financially as well as having a strong track record of quality and transformation. But we are not an organisation in any kind of distress."

"NHS Improvement has stated its full confidence in us to go on delivering our services to the same high standard that we always have."

Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust was formed after the merger of Shropshire County Primary Care Trust and Telford and Wrekin Primary Care Trust in 2011.

Closer contact for parents with new app

THE neonatal unit at Shropshire's women and children's centre will be the first in the Midlands to use a video technology app to help parents keep in touch with their babies.

Staff will be able to send short films of their patients to parents when they are away from the unit at Princess Royal Hospital in Telford.

The scheme was trialled at the Royal Hospital for Children in Glasgow last year and 200 parents signed up to the service.

It is hoped the vCreate system will offer reassurance to parents of premature or sick babies while they are being treated on the unit.

The video technology initiative was developed by medics keen to involve families more in patient care.

Parents will be able to access the video clips at any time and through any device.

When they take their babies home, they also have the option to download the clips and save them to form part of a baby care diary.

The maternity app has also won the support of national charity Bliss, which supports families with a baby in neonatal care.

Staff face hike in parking fees

STAFF at the county's two main hospitals say they have been told their parking fees could rise by up to 20 per cent.

Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), which runs Telford's Princess Royal Hospital and Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, informed employees of the changes in a letter which said it would come into force on April 1. The trust assured staff in its lowest-paid brackets they would not have to pay more, while the highest-paid members of staff will pay an extra £5 a month. It comes after higher charges were introduced for visitors in November when a new hourly pay structure came into effect.

The trust has defended the rise, which is the first in four years, and said it will help ease parking problems.

Baby units plans must be declared 'clinically sound'

Report by Lisa O'Brien

A SHAKE-UP of Shropshire's maternity services will need to be declared clinically sound by the West Midlands Clinical Senate before a public consultation can begin, health bosses have revealed.

Dr Julian Povey, chairman of Shropshire clinical commissioning group, said NHS England had made the decision and needs to know the clinical senate views the plans as "reasonable" before it can rubber-stamp them to send out to public consultation.

Mr Povey, who is a member of the senate, said a pre-consultation business case had now been drawn up and it is hoped a meeting can be arranged soon to progress it to the next stage. Under the new proposals, women will no longer be able to give birth at the rural Midwife Led Units (MLUs) in Oswestry, Ludlow and Bridgnorth.

It comes as health campaigners have expressed their dismay at the repeated temporary overnight closures of birthing services at Shropshire's rural maternity units.

Full services reopened at Oswestry maternity unit on Sunday after a series of temporary closures. This week campaigners claimed health bosses would be escalating the closures of the units in the future. They say if the closures happen it would be "almost impossible" to book births at the rural units.

Liz Grayston, of the Save Oswestry Maternity campaign, said women did want to use the unit but were being denied the option.

In response, head of midwifery Sarah Jamieson said: "With just over 97 per cent of women giving birth away from the rural MLUs, it is important our midwives are where the mums are. Following previous escalations we have spoken to women and staff and they have told us that the uncertainty of services causes the most concern."

"We have tried to remove some of that uncertainty that short-notice suspension of services can cause. To this end, we have recently suspended services at certain MLUs for longer periods to ensure that our midwives are where the mums are and to give some continuity of service."

"No decisions about any future temporary suspensions have been made."

Work sees drop-off spaces temporarily relocated

THREE drop-off parking spaces for people using Telford's women and children's centre have been temporarily relocated to allow ambulances to park during building work at the hospital.

Three of the seven spaces outside the centre at the Princess Royal Hospital have been moved to the main car park opposite so non-emergency ambulances can use the existing spaces for collecting and dropping-off patients.

The spaces are needed because of building

work which is being carried out to move the urgent care centre at the hospital from its current location in Clinic F to co-locate it alongside the accident and emergency department. The work is expected to be completed in the summer.

While the work is being carried out, spaces normally used by non-emergency patient transport will be needed for emergency ambulances. Rebecca Houlston, emergency centre manager at the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, said: "The relocation of

our urgent care centre next to our A&E is an important piece of work, which will help us to ensure people coming into our hospital are seen by the right people to best deal with their injury or illness."

"To allow the work to take place, our emergency 'blue light' ambulances will be using the area normally used by our non-emergency patient transport."

"To ensure our patients using this service are not inconvenienced too much, we will be using three of the drop-off spaces outside the

Hospice holds its annual training event at college



Hope House Children's Hospice staff members during their annual training event at North Shropshire College

HOPE House Children's Hospice held its annual training event at North Shropshire College's Oswestry campus.

The event was organised by Diane Hobday-Holme, head of care at Hope House, and ran for two full weeks.

Staff training, interactive workshops and team-building took place in the conference and board rooms at the campus.

Guest speakers ran a number of sessions and a full staff briefing was held on the last day of training.

Penny Hardy, business development assistant at North Shropshire Council, who liaised

with Hope House and organised facilities for the event, said: "We were delighted to be asked to host Hope House's staff training for the second year."

"This really demonstrates how highly regarded our facilities are by outside organisations."

Complimentary

"The event was a huge success and staff were very complimentary about our rooms and facilities."

"We're very much looking forward to continuing this partnership in the coming years."

Diane Hobday-Holme said: "We would like to thank North Shropshire College for the use of their facilities."

"The staff thoroughly enjoyed the training weeks and being off-site."

For information about hiring facilities at the college's Oswestry Campus people can visit www.nsc-oswestry.schoolhire.co.uk or contact Penny Hardy on 01939 262187 or via p.hardy@nsc.ac.uk.

To apply, or to find out more about courses starting in September, people can visit www.nsc.ac.uk or call the admissions team on (01691) 688080.

Shropshire women and children's centre for non-emergency ambulances.

"Those three spaces, which are used predominantly by people dropping off women in labour or collecting new born babies to go home, will be relocated just a few yards away in the main car park, and will be clearly marked to ensure they are used for the correct purpose." While the work takes place, an attendant from CP Plus, which manages the car parks on behalf of the trust, will be on hand to assist patients, visitors and staff.

18

Guide dog group raises over £10,000

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, March 15, 2018

OSWESTRY Guide Dogs Fundraising Group raised more than £10,000 last year and has pledged to continue its work.

The group has a number of events planned and member Lin Stapley is offering to go along with her guide dog Declan to talk to schools and organisations to raise awareness.

Spokesperson Kelly Stapley, said: “We had a brilliant 2017 and finished the year on a fantastic £10,816.

“A big thank you to our wonderful volunteers and the people of Oswestry and surrounding areas for their continued support.

“As a guide dog costs over £50,000 from birth to retirement and there are many blind and visually impaired people on the waiting list for one of these ‘life changers’, we will be continuing the hard work in 2018.”

The group will hold a wedding fair in aid of Guide Dogs on April 29 at the Memorial Hall in Oswestry from 10am to 4pm.

Entry is £1 per person and will include one ticket entry to the prize draw.

Any school, club or group that would like to learn more about Guide Dogs from Lin and her dog Declan should ring (01691) 662644.

Talks are free although donations are gratefully accepted.

Tree of light fundraiser is huge success

A ROTARY tree of light scheme has raised £6,000 for 11 charities.

Oswestry’s appeal this year, organised by Mike Jones, has announced the money will go to charities including Midlands Air Ambulance, Severn Hospice and the North Shropshire Special Olympics. In the last six years, the club has raised £36,000 for good causes. Mr Jones said: “Each year we seem to increase the number of sponsors who donate in memory of a loved one, living or departed, or to celebrate a special event. This year we have been fortunate to receive a number of large donations given in the knowledge that every penny is passed on to meet the needs of many local people.

“We are very grateful to the manager and staff of Oswestry’s Sainsbury’s store for allowing Oswestry Rotary Club to site our Christmas tree on their forecourt where our annual appeal has raised more than £36,000 over the last six years.

“Our thanks go to all who have generously sponsored this event, including members of our business community who have given financial support or provided us with assistance and materials including the beautiful Christmas tree.

“The generosity of the people of Oswestry and district has once again been incredible. “

Pupils are told ‘get wrapped up’

A BROKEN central heating boiler brought an “old school” response – when parents in Welshpool were asked to send their children to the classroom in warm clothing.

With many schools across Shropshire and Mid Wales closed recently because of snow, frozen pipes and heating problems, the head at the Welsh speaking Ysgol Gymraeg Y Trallwng took a different approach.

Bethan Bledwyn wrote to parents explaining that the boiler was broken.

In a message to parents on Monday following the breakdown she wrote that the school would be open as normal despite the boiler problem.

She added: “If you feel it would be too cold at school to send your children, that’s fine. They do not have to wear their school uniform and can wear warm, layered clothing.

“We apologise for this continuing issue but are doing all we can, as a school, to get it fixed.” The school has 75 pupils and almost all turned up on Tuesday either in uniform and layers or in warm trousers and fleeces.

A school spokeswoman said: “Those that are not at school we understand have the usual coughs and colds.”

Children also enjoyed activities to keep them warm during the day.

Inquiry launched to investigate shortage of residential places for children in care

Report by Dominic Robertson

The inquiry is tasked with cutting the costs of spot-purchasing residential placements, and reducing the reliance on out-of-county placements.

Councillor Nick Bardsley, cabinet member for children’s services and education, said: “The inquiry follows on from an agenda item at the previous scrutiny meeting where councillors were appraised of the challenges that are currently faced across the country about the availability of suitable placements for looked-after children.

“Shropshire is not alone. It was reported that whilst the majority of our children are placed

in stable placements – some 70 per cent with foster families, others in residential provision – it is increasingly difficult to secure appropriate placements for a small but significant minority of children whose needs are complex.

“We are concerned about this and we want to find alternative ways to secure high-quality placements for our most vulnerable children. We want councillors to work with officers to consider the challenges and to explore innovative approaches and solutions for Shropshire’s most vulnerable children.”

The report outlining the terms of reference makes clear the costs involved to the authority.

It states: “Although every child should receive the type of care that is best for them, it remains an inescapable fact that there are very

large differences in cost for different types of care. It typically costs Shropshire Council £450 a week to place a child with foster parents, compared to a typical cost of £850 a week for a placement arranged by an independent fostering agency.

“However either option is considerably cheaper than residential care, which is on average £3,880 a week.

“Although it is important to look at ways to reduce the cost of care, it is absolutely crucial that the council is able to find suitable accommodation for its looked-after children. This is becoming increasingly difficult for all local authorities, as demand for both foster and residential care is growing faster than the supply of placements.”

Report by Jonny Drury

TAXPAYERS in Shropshire could be charged £40 to have their garden waste bins emptied under plans.

The idea for the annual garden waste charge was mooted in the latest full Shropshire Council meeting and could potentially bring in £1.5 million for the authority.

Garden waste is currently collected from bins on kerbsides across the borough every fortnight, along with recyclable glass, cans, plastic, paper and cardboard.

Food waste is also accepted in garden bins in the former North Shropshire, South Shropshire and Shrewsbury and Atcham districts.

However the council is not currently able to implement any changes due to its current waste disposal contract with Veolia. Conservative leader of the council, Councillor Peter Nutting, said the council will look into the idea in the long term. He said: “That is for the future, it is not part of the next financial strategy but we will look into it to see if it is viable the year after. We will only do it if it is sensible to do it. Previous cabinet members have said we should have already done it, it sounds easy to go out and charge for it, but there is no point in doing it unless we get the money for ourselves at Shropshire Council.”

However, Green Party Councillor for Porthing, Julian Dean, said the charge would not add a substantial amount of money to the council budget. “I think it will deter people from gardening, and it could hit people who are on low incomes,” Councillor Dean said.

“The best way to deposit garden waste is to use it for composting at home, that is the best way to do it, rather than move the waste all across the county, which is what will happen if this comes in.

“Garden waste can be used as a good resource in the area, particularly looking at Shrewsbury to help the flowers in the town.

“I think people would sign up to it, but it would bring in pennies compared to the budget the council has.”

A spokesman for Shropshire Council said a period of public consultation would need to take place before any new charges could be implemented.

The spokesman said: “Any proposals to charge for garden waste collection in the Shropshire Council area would need to be approved by Defra in line with the terms of the waste PFI contract.”

Warm tributes paid to comedy genius Doddy



Ken Dodd leads the countdown to the opening of the Shropshire Orthopaedic Hospital League of Friends’ annual fete in Oswestry in 1987

TRIBUTES have been paid to veteran comedian Sir Ken Dodd who has died at the age of 90.

The legendary funnyman performed many times in Shropshire and Mid Wales and was due to appear at Hafren in Newtown later this year.

The star was no stranger to the Oswestry area.

In the 1980s he was on hand two years running to lead the countdown to the grand opening of the Shropshire Orthopaedic Hospital’s League of Friends’ annual fete in the hospital grounds.

The hospital later became the Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital.

The Liverpool legend had recently been released from hospital after six weeks of treatment for a chest infection.

On Friday, he had married Anne Jones, his partner of 40 years, at their house, the same one he grew up in, in the Liverpool suburb of Knotty Ash.

Lady Dodd described him as “a most life-enhancing, brilliant, creative comedian”.

She said her late husband just wanted to make people happy.

Tributes to the comedy genius were also paid by Shirley Tart, writer for the Oswestry and Border Chronicle’s sister paper the Shropshire Star.

Early in their long friendship Shirley was asked by the comedian to ghost write articles for a TV magazine.

Shirley said: “It’s sometimes all too easy to talk sweepingly about people leaving gaps in our lives, in this case, for many of us it is all too true. Ken Dodd was a one-off, a local Liverpoolian lad who died in the house where he was born.”

Quarter of county motorists admit using phones

MORE than a quarter of drivers in Shropshire are still using their phone while behind the wheel, according to a survey.

Motorists are starting to change their habits, but a large minority are still breaking the law.

Of more than 1,000 taking part in a Shropshire Star survey, 27 per cent of people confessed to checking their mobile phone while driving at some point over the last 12 months.

The figure is a nine per cent drop on 2016, when the Shropshire Star first ran the survey, but will still come as a disappointment to police

and safety campaigners who have been behind several high profile campaigns.

A total of 1,160 readers responded to the survey, which also found that 13 per cent of people had also sent or read a text message while at the wheel, and 12 per cent had used their phone to make or receive a call.

The figure fell in both categories but still represents a sizeable number of people prepared to put themselves and other road users at risk while driving.

West Mercia Police Superintendent Paul

Moxley said it was concerning to see that some people were still prepared to use their phones while driving, despite believing it is dangerous.

He said: “It is of concern to see that in the last 12 months 27 per cent of motorists who completed this survey checked their mobile phone whilst driving at the wheel, particularly so given that 93 per cent have indicated that they think it is dangerous.

“Clearly there are still motorists on the roads of Shropshire who are ignoring the law and blatantly endangering other road users.

“During our national campaign, a total of 88 motorists were caught using their mobile phones at the wheel in the West Mercia area.

“This behaviour is unacceptable and our officers will continue to ensure that we do all we can to enforce this important legislation and take such drivers off our roads.”

Superintendent Moxley added: “Improving the safety of our roads is a year-round commitment for our officers and I would urge those who have responded to this poll to think twice before reaching for their phones.”

Former pub has been upgraded to spacious family home

A former public house having bed and breakfast potential, Tontine Inn on Church Lane, Molverley, Oswestry is now a large detached seven en-suite bedroomed home.

Being spacious and well maintained in a pleasant location, it is for sale through Morris Marshall & Poole at £480,000 with no chain.

It has been recently upgraded to become a spacious family home.

Having oil fired central heating and double glazing throughout, it includes a large sun room, an open-plan living/dining room with an impressive fireplace, seven first floor bedrooms all with en-suite bathrooms or shower facilities. There is also a fitted kitchen, a guest lounge and ancillary ground floor toilets and stores.

The grounds provide ample parking and a range of useful detached stores/workshop or garage.

A spokesman for the selling agent said: "The current internal accommodation has been recently up-graded to afford a spacious family home or offers an opportunity for bed and breakfast from guest bedrooms and a ground floor lounge."

The seven first floor bedrooms all have en-suite bathroom or shower facilities to a good standard. A further "lounge and kitchen" are set on the first floor and an external staircase approach is available off the drive approach.

The grounds are well defined and afford a range of useful detached stores/workshop or garages, extensive paved patio area adjoining the sun room and a further substantial hard-standing area capable of further landscaping to afford an attractive garden if so desired.

"An inspection of this individual property is strongly advised to appreciate the space and quality of the existing accommodation and also the potential to offer an alternative use for parts of the property," added the spokesman for the selling agent.

KEY FEATURES

- Former public house
- Now large detached home
- Seven en-suite bathrooms
- Open plan living/dining room
- Bed & breakfast potential

MELVERLEY £480,000



TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Morris Marshall & Poole

TEL: 01691 679595

EMAIL: oswestry@morrismarshall.co.uk



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Property sits in a most attractive rural location

WYKEY, RUYTON-XI-TOWNS
£525,000

Stone House occupies a most attractive rural location on the outskirts of the small hamlet of Wykey approximately one mile from Ruyton-Xi-Towns with its local facilities.

The property, understood to date back to the early 19th century, is constructed of sandstone and part rendered under a slated roof. It has a garden and approximately three and a half acres of land.

The property is for sale through JJ Dell & Co with a guide price of £525,000. Accommodation comprises an entrance lobby, sitting room, dining room, conservatory, kitchen, inner hallway, study/bedroom, rear entrance and shower room.

There are four bedrooms and a bathroom.

Contact JJ Dell & Co on 01691 653437 and 680212.



Property is spacious and in much sought after area

ST MARTINS
£369,950

<<<

A desirable and spacious five bedroom detached family home, Inch Murrin in St Martins, is in a much sought after area.

It is on the market through Town and Country for £369,950 and there is no chain. Local part exchange would be considered. The property is a magnificent family residence which has been built to a high specification throughout and benefits from entrance hall, cloakroom, office/sitting room, lounge, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, utility room, two master bedrooms with en-suite and a further three bedrooms and family bathroom.

Viewing is highly recommended to appreciate this beautiful property.

For more details contact Town and Country on 01691 679631.

J. J. DELL & Co.

CHARTERED SURVEYORS

LLANGYNOG



- Spacious Detached Dormer House
- Views Overlooking The Valley
- OFCH & DG
- Reception Hall
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Living Room & Dining Room
- Cloakroom & Utility
- Four Bedrooms (Master En Suite)
- Paddock - In All Approx. 2 Acres
- EPC Band - E
- JJD973

GUIDE PRICE £450,000

WYKEY, RUYTON XI TOWNS



- Early Nineteenth Century Country Property
- In total Approx. Three And A Half Acres
- OFCH & DG
- Three Reception
- Conservatory
- Kitchen & Utility
- Four Bedrooms
- Bathroom & Shower Room
- Outbuildings
- Gardens & Pool
- EPC Band - E
- JJD985

GUIDE PRICE £499,950

WESTON, NR. OSWESTRY



- Grade II Listed Semi-Detached Property
- CH & DG
- Reception Hall
- Study Area
- Cloakroom
- Lounge
- Modern Dining Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Garden
- Parking
- EPC Band-C
- JJD984

GUIDE PRICE £225,000

LLANYMYNECH



- Attractive Detached Bungalow
- Central Village Location
- OFCH & PVC DG
- Reception Hall
- Lounge
- Kitchen
- Two Conservatories
- Two Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Garage And Utility
- Ample Car Parking
- EPC Band - D
- JJD990

GUIDE PRICE £159,950

GOBOWEN, NR. OSWESTRY



- Retirement Bungalow On Purpose Built Complex
- Minimum Age 55 Years
- CH & DG
- Lounge/Dining Area
- Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Cloakroom
- Two Bedrooms
- New Bathroom/Wet Room
- Garage
- Rear Enclosed Courtyard
- Short Distance From Office
- EPC Band - D
- JJD986

GUIDE PRICE £103,000

GLYN CEIRIOG



- Attractive Mid Terraced Property
- Central Village Location
- OCH & PVC DG
- Living Room
- Kitchen Diner
- Two Bedrooms
- Shower Room
- Walk-In Wardrobe
- Loft Room/Office
- Front And Rear Gardens
- On-Street Parking
- EPC Band - E
- JJD978

£140,000

GOBOWEN



- Close Care Residential Bungalow On Purpose Built Complex
- CH & DG
- Lounge/Dining Area
- Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Rear Enclosed Paved Yard
- Further Overnight Visitor Accommodation Available
- EPC Band - E
- JJD987

OFFERS IN THE REGION OF £69,950

HINDFORD, NR. WHITTINGTON



- Spacious Character Property
- Wealth of Period Features
- OFCH
- Reception Hall
- Sitting Room
- Dining Room
- Breakfast Kitchen And Utility
- Three Bedrooms
- Garage And Car Parking
- Side And Rear Gardens With Patio Area
- EPC Band - F
- JJD994

GUIDE PRICE £375,000

CHURCH STREET, OSWESTRY - TO LET



- Most Attractive Grade II Listed Property
- Short Distance From Major Retailers And Institutions
- Bar/Restaurant/Cafe Venue
- Town Centre Location
- Busy Trading Position
- Reception Area
- Lounge And Bar
- Beer Cellar
- Function Room
- Kitchen
- Male/Female/Disabled Toilets
- Flexible Terms To Be Agreed
- EPC Band -
- JJD091

RENT - £12,500

WESTON, NR. OSWESTRY-TO LET



- Two Bed. Semi-Detached House
- CH & DG
- Reception Hall
- Lounge
- Dining Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Car Parking
- Rent £575 pcm. Deposit £900.
- Agreement £180 inc. VAT
- References Required
- EPC Band - C
- JJD097

RENT £575 PCM

OSWESTRY - TO LET



- One Bedroomed Flat Convenient For Town Centre
- Shared Entrance Lobby
- Landing
- Sitting Room
- Dining Kitchen
- Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Car Parking Available
- EPC Band - D
- Rent £375 PCM. Deposit £375
- Agreement £180.
- JJD068

RENT £375 PCM

PROPERTIES REQUIRED

- All Types Of Properties Required
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JJD000

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llangollen@bowensonandwatson.co.uk

Chirk
01691 772443
2 Church Street, Chirk,
Wrexham, LL14 5HA
chirk@bowensonandwatson.co.uk

NEW




**Wharf Cottages
Rhoswiel** £190,000

- A deceptively spacious 2 end terrace Canal Side Cottage
- Kitchen, Lounge, Study, Cloakroom
- 2 Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- A canal side garden, further side and rear gardens
- Single Garage, two loose boxes and parking spaces
- UPVC double glazing and gas fired central heating
- NO CHAIN

NEW




**Liverpool Road
Oswestry** £199,950

- A spacious Edwardian 4 Bedroom End-of-Terrace House
- Situated within an established residential location
- The property has been maintained to a high standard
- Entrance Porch, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Living Room
- Kitchen, Utility, Sun Room & ground floor Shower Rm
- 3 Double Bedrooms & 1 Single Bedroom
- Further Sun Room and Family Bathroom
- Enclosed courtyard and garage.
- Gas central heating and double glazing. EPC Rating E (40)

NEW




**Heritage Way
Llanymynech** £184,995

- A generous sized 3 bedroom detached family home
- Situated on a popular residential development
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge, Dining Area
- Kitchen, Conservatory Master Bedroom with En-suite
- 2 further Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- An enclosed side garden laid to lawn, D/G
- Single garage and driveway providing off road parking
- Gas C/H and uPVC double glazed windows and doors

NEW PRICE



**Hillside
Oswestry** £99,995

- A 3 Bedroom semi-detached house
- Requires modernization throughout
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge
- Kitchen and Dining Room
- 3 Dble Bedrms & Family Bathroom
- Generous sized garden, close to Old Hill fort
- EPC Rating G (9). NO CHAIN




**Oswalds Close
Oswestry** £329,950

- A well proportioned 6 bedroom detached family home
- Living Room and Dining Room, well appointed Kitchen
- Utility Room and Cloakroom
- 6 good sized Bedrooms (2 with en-suites) and Family Bathroom.
- Gas fired central heating and hardwood double glazing throughout
- Well maintained to the highest of standards
- Good sized gardens with views over the Bynhafod playing fields
- EPC Rating C (75)




**Trefonen Road
Morda** £270,000

- An immaculately presented 3 bedroom detached family home
- Set on the edge of the popular village of Morda
- Outstanding views to the rear over open countryside.
- The property has been extended and tastefully renovated throughout
- Entrance Hall, Shower Room/Utility, Kitchen/Diner, Lounge
- 3 Bedrooms, family bathroom
- uPVC Double Glazing and Gas C/H. EPC Rating C (74)
- Garage and gardens with views to rear.




**Whittington Road
Gobowen** £159,995

- A spacious 2 bedroom semi-detached bungalow
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room
- Shower Room and 2 Bedrooms
- An enclosed garden mainly laid to lawn
- Driveway to the side
- Gas Fired Central Heating and UPVC D/G
- EPC Rating D (62)
- NO CHAIN



**Upper Brook
Street** £104,995

- NO CHAIN
- A well presented two bedroom mid terrace property
- Situated on the fringe of the town centre
- Lounge, Kitchen,
- Two Bedrooms and Bathroom
- Rear Garden with Shed




**Ellesmere Road,
St Martins** £149,995

- NO CHAIN
- Spacious 3 bed end of terrace property
- Ent Hall, Hall, Kitchen, Living Rm
- Dining Rm, Rear Porch & Conservatory
- 3 good sized beds & Shower Rm
- Generous size plot offering a wide range of uses
- Driveway & single garage to side
- Oil C/H and UPVC Double Glazing. EPC Rating F (30)




**Overton Road
St Martins** £199,995

- NO CHAIN
- An immaculately presented 4 Bedroom Detached Family Home
- The property was constructed in 2000
- Hallway, Cloaks, Kitchen/Dining Rm, Utility & Lounge
- Master Bedroom with en-suite
- 3 further Bedrooms & Family Bathroom
- Ample off road parking for at least 4 cars, large garage
- Private courtyard style garden to front & rear
- Gas C/H and UPVC double glazing. EPC Rating C (69)




Llanrhaeadr YM Mochnant £185,000

- A traditional 3 bedroom semi-detached stone cottage
- Spacious living accommodation over three floors comprising
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, and Family Room.
- To the lower level is the Kitchen, Dining Room, Conservatory
- Utility Room and Shower Room.
- 3 bedrooms and a Family Bathroom
- Riverside garden with wooden decking area
- Oil Fired Central heating and partly double glazed windows
- NO CHAIN



**Building Plot
Chirk Bank** £74,995

- A residential plot located in the picturesque village of Chirk Bank extending to 0.04 acres or thereabouts with outline planning permission for the erection of one detached dwelling
- The site is located within walking distance of the Shropshire Union Canal and the Chirk Aqueduct






**Morda Road
Oswestry** £325,000

- A recently modernised 3 Bedroom Detached Home
- lovely outlook across Oswestry Cricket Ground, perfect for cricket lovers.
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge, Kitchen
- Breakfast Area, Dining Room and Sun Room
- 3 good sized Bedrooms and Family Bathroom.
- An enclosed lawn area, with patio providing an outdoor seating area.
- Graveled driveway to front & rear
- Driveway leading to Double Garage.
- Gas C/H and UPVC Double Glazed windows




**Hampton Rise
Oswestry** £325,000

- A rare opportunity to purchase a 3 Bedroom Detached House
- Situated within a desirable established residential location
- Entrance Porch, Entrance Hall, Cloakroom
- Dining Room, Lounge, Kitchen/Breakfast Room & Utility
- 3 Bedrooms and a Family Bathroom.
- Excellent plot with mature front and rear gardens
- Driveway and single garage
- Oil central heating & Double glazing
- EPC Rating D (60)
- NO CHAIN

**Church View
Hadnall** £345,000

- BRAND NEW 4 Bedroom Detached Family Home with Integral Garage
- Open plan Kitchen/Diner, Utility Room.
- Spacious Living room with bay window and Cloakroom.
- Master Bedroom with fitted wardrobes and En-suite.
- Three further Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- Enclosed rear garden, Integral Garage and Driveway.
- PART EXCHANGE OR HELP TO BUY IS AVAILABLE (Help to Buy Price £276,000)



**Regent Court
Oswestry** £110,000

- Well appointed 2 Bed 1st Flr Apartment
- Living/Dining Area, Fitted Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms (master en-suite)
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- Security entrance system
- EPC Rating C '71'




**Morda Road
Oswestry** £375,000

- A substantial Detached 4 Bedroom Family Home
- Within walking distance of the Market Town of Oswestry
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Music Room, Office, Kitchen/Diner
- Utility, and Dining Room, Master Bedroom with En-suite
- 2nd Bedroom with En-suite, 2 further Bedrooms & Family Bathroom
- plot of 1/3 acre with front and rear gardens
- Orchard/vegetable patch, poly-tunnel and patio areas
- Gas C/H and UPVC Double Glazed with workshop.




Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant £450,000

- A stunning Grade II Listed Farmhouse
- Situated in an elevated position with outstanding views over the Tanat Valley
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- An well appointed 2 Bedroom Semi-Detached Bungalow
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- Off road parking
- Gas C/H and hardwood D/G
- EPC Rating D (65)



Minshall Place £79,995

- NO CHAIN
- Spacious and well maintained Leasehold 2 Bedroom First Floor Apartment
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms and Bathroom.
- Rear garden laid mainly to lawn



Detached home enjoys superb rural views

MOELFRE
£595,000

Town and Country Oswestry are delighted to offer to the market Y Dafarn, Moelfre – a highly desirable and attractive four bedroom detached family home with outstanding countryside views and overlooking Moelfre Lake.

It is on the market with no chain and an asking price of £595,000. It is a perfect country retreat away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The property sits within three acres of fields and gardens.

Accommodation briefly comprises a reception room, living room, shower room, kitchen/breakfast room, laundry, orangery, study, master bedroom with en-suite, three further bedrooms and bathroom.

Contact Town and Country on 01691 679631 for more details.



17th century home offers highly flexible accommodation

HOPE
£725,000

<<<

Little Hope, at Hope, Leighton near Welshpool is a 17th century cottage that has undergone a large extension.

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Nestled in the hamlet of Hope, Leighton is just two miles from Welshpool, with all necessary services to hand. It is located on the original Offa's Dyke and sits within an acre of garden and grounds in an elevated position on Long Mountain. The result is a magnificent uninterrupted vista across open countryside – a true wow.

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O.I.R.O.

£149,950

Attractive late Victorian terrace property occupying a very popular location overlooking Brynhafoed Playing Fields. Comprising, lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, rear porch, two bedrooms and bathroom. Gas central heating and some replacement double glazing and garden to rear. Offered for sale with no ongoing chain. EPC Rating = D(64)

Oswestry Office 01691 679595



34 Summerfield Close, Oswestry

£139,950

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Oswestry Office 01691 679595



50 Highfields, Shrewsbury

£235,000

Well presented and extended three bedroom family home situated in a popular residential district convenient for Shrewsbury Town Centre and local schools. Double glazed, gas fired central heating. EPC Rating = 69(C)

Oswestry Office 01691 679595



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Welshpool

£179,950

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Stunning Grade II farmhouse enjoys superb views

LLANRHAEADR
£450,000

Clynog, Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant near Oswestry is a stunning Grade II listed farmhouse in an elevated position with outstanding views over the Tanat Valley.

It is for sale through Bowen Son & Watson at £450,000. The property is situated on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant close to the confluence of the rivers Tanat and Rhaeadr in the stunning Berwyn Mountains and near Pistyll Rhaeadr.

In brief, the property has a reception hall, music room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen lounge, kitchen, utility room, rear lobby, coal house, gallery landing, a loft storage room, integral garage, gun room, five first floor bedrooms, a family bathroom, five attic rooms, large gardens and an orchard/paddock.



Originally forming part of the Wynnstay Estate, the property has an attractive 19th century frontage with an earlier farmhouse now serving as its rear wing. The property has remained in the current owner's family for over 100 years and this sale therefore offers a unique opportunity to purchase one of the area's most historic homes.

Clynog is approached over a well-maintained driveway which is owned by the property with original iron carriage and walking gates leading onto the courtyard with adjoining lawned area which provides access to the property and ample parking.

The agents have been informed it is Grade II Listed and substantial repairs were made to the roof around seven years ago.

Contact Bowen Son & Watson on 01691 652367.



Well located property in hamlet comes with cottage

LLANGEDWYN
£229,950 >>>

Well located in the small hamlet of Pentre Felin in the Tanat Valley, 2 Glanrafon Cottages, Pentre Felin, Llangedwyn, comes with an attached single bedroom cottage subject to a protected tenancy, known as Number 1.

Coming with good sized gardens, a range of detached outbuildings and having scope for improvement, it is for sale through Morris Marshall & Poole at £229,950.

The main drive approach off the access lane passes by a range of brick/stone and slate roofed detached stores providing ample storage.

A small section is included with No1 Glanrafon Cottages, and is therefore subject to the protected tenancy status.

Contact Morris Marshall & Poole on 01691 679595 for more details about the property and to arrange a viewing.



Well presented detached family home has six bedrooms

OSWESTRY
£329,950 <<<

Having views over the Brynhafod playing fields, 9 Oswalds Close, Oswestry is a well proportioned six-bedroom detached family home with well presented living accommodation set out over three floors.

It is for sale through Bowen Son & Watson at £329,950.

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hall, a living room and a dining room, a well appointed kitchen with a utility room and a cloakroom/WC, whilst on the first and second floors there are six good sized bedrooms (two with en-suites) and a family bathroom.

The property has gas fired central heating and hardwood double glazing throughout. Internally the property has been well maintained to the highest of standards whilst outside there are good sized gardens.

Contact Bowen Son & Watson on 01691 652367.

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26 Firm to send more knife banks to city

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, March 15, 2018

MORE knife banks from Shropshire will be sent to Wolverhampton to get weapons off the street.

The leader of Wolverhampton Council, Councillor Roger Lawrence, travelled to the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry to see for himself the Knife Angel statue that has come to symbolise the Save a Life, Surrender your Knife campaign.

He also collected the latest knife bank, made at the centre, for the city.

"This will be our fourth and I understand we will also have a fifth," he said.

Councillor Lawrence said that there had to be a rounded approach to getting knives off the streets. "The knife banks will prevent crimes from being committed," he said. "If the knives are taken off the streets then they cannot be used to injure or cause deaths. Equally we have to educate our communities about the dangers of carrying a weapon. We seem to have grasped the problem with guns and gun crime is down. But knives are so easy to obtain and we have to make, particularly our young people, aware that if they take a knife out with them, they could end up with a murder charge."

He said the problem of mental health must also be addressed.

He said: "There are many tragic incidents involving weapons where there are underlying, mental health issues."

During his visit Councillor Lawrence engraved a knife that will be placed on the sculpture, created by artist, Alfie Bradley.

Chairman of the British Ironwork Centre Clive Knowles said he was pleased that Wolverhampton was continuing its involvement in the Save a Life, Surrender Your Knife national campaign.

He has pledged to carry on working with local authorities and police forces.

Fieldbounce team visits Hope House

FIELDBOUNCE Music Festival is continuing its drive to raise money for Hope House Children's Hospice ahead of the event on May 5.

The festival at Park Hall near Oswestry is attempting to break a Guinness World Record by gathering the largest number of people dressed at zebras in a public place at one time.

Fieldbounce bosses will make a donation to Hope House for each festival-goer who participates.

Last week organisers attended an open morning at Hope House Hospice to gain an insight into the charity and understand exactly how the festival can help.

Meanwhile, Fieldbounce organisers say they are half way to their target of selling 10,000 tickets.

The likes of Radio One DJ Danny Howard and Scouting for Girls are playing at the festival.

Festival CEO Shawn Melusi has confirmed ticket sales are now well over the 5,000 mark and are continuing to climb.

He said a lot of the ticket sales have come from outside the Oswestry area.

However he and his team have events organised in the coming weeks to bring the local punters in. He said: "I'm happy with how it has all been going, we've hit 5,000 now which is half way."

Three arrested after drugs raid

A CLAMPDOWN on drugs in a town had led to three arrests following a raid on a property.

An operation was executed on Saturday evening in Oldford, Welshpool, where heroin, crack cocaine and cannabis were found.

Dyfed-Powys Police also found a taser weapon that was disguised as a torch, and three people at the address was arrested.

Superintendent Jon Cummins, commander for Powys, said: "Great proactive work by Welshpool Police this evening, acting on community intelligence to prevent the supply of drugs."

People who have information about drugs in the community, are asked to contact the police on 101 or they can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Young farmer sent to youth custody after launching 'cowardly attack' on his victim

Report by Simon Stone

A YOUNG farmer who had been drinking too much on the night of an agricultural show delivered "a sly, cowardly blow" to another farmer after an argument about sheep rustling, a court has heard.

The victim was knocked out cold after he received a boxing style punch with full force, Mold Crown Court was told.

He fell forward onto the ground without trying to save himself.

And while he was lying helpless he was punched a number of times by Iwan Hedd Roberts, 20.

Roberts, of Abernodydd Farm at Llangadfan, Welshpool, admitted assaulting farmer Samuel Griffiths in September of last year.

He received a 12-month sentence of youth

custody. Judge Rhys Rowlands imposed a two-year restraining order not to approach the victim or write anything about him on social media.

The judge described his actions as "cowardly drunken violence".

He said his actions could have had life-threatening consequences for the victim.

The court heard that the defendant believed that the victim had been spreading rumours about a member of his family, implying that he had been responsible for recent sheep rustling incidents.

"There is, I am told, nothing to substanti-

ate those rumours," the judge said. The prosecution said that Mr Griffiths had not started those rumours but had simply mentioned to police what he had heard.

However, the judge said that Roberts should simply have ignored those rumours.

But after the annual agricultural show at Llanfair Caereinion Roberts saw Mr Griffiths in the pub and sought to confront him.

Both men were asked to leave and once outside Roberts threw a boxing punch from behind.

He swung his arm with full force which caused him to land head first on the pavement without making any attempt to break his fall.

The judge warned that such blows could often prove fatal and lead to manslaughter charges.

He was unconscious for a significant period of time and was bleeding heavily from his nose and mouth.

If Roberts had stopped there then it would have been serious enough, the judge said.

But he had gone on in a drunken temper – when he lost all self-control – to punch the unconscious man five or five times.

Roberts left saying the victim deserved it.

The victim had bruising and swelling, his teeth were chipped and he had headaches for 11 days.

Defending barrister William Hingston said defendant was a hard working family man who contributed a lot to his community including the young farmers' cub and the youth club.

Mr Hingston said his client apologised.

Report by Jordan Reynolds

TWO businesses in Shropshire have cried foul after finding themselves on an official list of employers fined for underpaying minimum wage staff.

Globebrow Limited, trading as Manor Adventure, based in Craven Arms, was described by the Government as failing to pay £33,889 to 111 workers.

Penycoed Horse Riding Centre, in Pant, near Oswestry, was fined after it failed to pay £747.90 to four workers.

But in both cases the firms involved said there were exceptional circumstances and to brand them as paying below the minimum wage was both misleading and unfair.

Manor Adventure's David Constance said that the company, which employs 250 people, was fined £11,000, but that the "underpayment" was because it had been advised by tax officials to deduct live-in workers' food from their wages.

Meanwhile, George and James Hanson, trading as Penycoed Horse Riding Centre, were fined after they failed to pay £747.90 to four workers.

But Mr Hanson said this was due to employees' pay being reduced for the costs of housing their horses at the site.

He said: "It is due to deductions we took out of their wage for livery, as a few members of staff kept their horses here. We were deducting £20 out of their wages for it, but as they only worked at the weekends it put them under the national minimum wage."

"We were told we can't do that and I said that the girls were happy with that and they said we've got to pay it back, but it's all sorted now."

Employers who pay workers less than the minimum wage not only have to pay back arrears of wages to the worker at current minimum wage rates but also face financial penalties of up to 200 per cent of arrears, capped at £20,000 per worker.

These businesses were among a list of 179 that were named by the Government for underpaying more than 9,000 minimum wage workers by £1.1 million.

As well as recovering backpay for 9,200 workers, the Government also fined the employers a total of £1.3 million in penalties for breaking national minimum wage laws.

The most prolific offending sectors in this round were retailers, hospitality businesses and hairdressers.

School pupils celebrate music festival glory



Talented musicians from Moreton Hall School enjoyed great success at the recent Oswestry Youth Music Festival

MORETON Hall's music department celebrated a record number of prize winners at the recent Oswestry Youth Music Festival.

The range of age groups and categories was diverse, from junior school age through to sixth form; from successes in the musical theatre class through to ensembles, chamber choir, piano solos and duets, vocal solos to drums.

"Moreton Sixth pupils, Georgie Lang, and Morgan-Darcy Rees-Deacon's recent triumphs are prime examples of what Moreton is able to produce in a nurturing and encouraging environment such as the music department," said director of music Helen Rayner.

Georgina, who has been offered a place at

Oxford in September to read computer science and philosophy successfully won the 18 and under piano solo set piece. Morgan-Darcy became not only the winner of the 21 and under vocal solo class, beating students already studying at music college, but was also crowned Oswestry Youth Music Festival's senior prize winner and was awarded the prestigious Oswestry Town Council Cup.

Reflecting on the day and on her musical journey, Morgan-Darcy said: "I could not have done it if it were not for the continuous encouragement and support I've received from the music department all day every day for the past nine years – not only concerning music

endeavours but all of my other commitments and subjects too.

"The confidence it gives me is unexplainable and allows me to give my all in everything I do."

Both Georgina and Morgan-Darcy started in Moreton First – Moreton Hall's Prep School – and have been stalwarts of the Music Department ever since. Now, in their final year of Moreton Hall, they look forward to a life time of music-making.

Georgina said: "Performances are always the highlight of playing an instrument."

"The competitive edge and chance to win is just the cherry on the top."

Man was left with tip of blade in back after fight

A MAN was left with the broken tip of a knife in his back after being stabbed during a drunken row between two friends at an Oswestry house, a court heard.

Kristen Breckell needed surgery on the lower part of his back to remove the piece of the kitchen knife after the clash in December last year. The victim was stabbed by 28-year-old businessman Nicholas Woodhead during a drinking session at his home. At Shrewsbury Crown Court Woodhead was jailed for 16 months having admitted a charge of wounding.

He had said that he had been acting in self-defence but his actions went beyond the use of reasonable force.

Judge Anthony Lowe said that Woodhead had a "touch of Jekyll and Hyde" about him being a hard working family man, but this was the second occasion he had been involved in the use of a knife.

Passing sentence Judge Lowe said it was accepted the victim had started the dispute between the two men, but it was less clear what happened when Woodhead picked up the knife.

The court heard that Mr Breckell had cuts to his right hand and to both forearms and to the side of his neck and a black eye.

The stab wound to the lower left area of his back was inflicted as he was moving away and the tip of the blade had broken.

On December 15 the pair had been drinking at the defendant's home in Millers Field, Morda, when a row developed.

Caroline Harris, prosecuting, said a bottle was thrown by Mr Breckell into a neighbour's garden and the two men were grappling which

was broken up by the defendant's partner. Back in the kitchen the row continued and Woodhead had "grabbed at the first thing to hand" which was a bread knife when he was protecting his partner.

Debra White, for Woodhead, claimed it had not been the first time the victim had behaved in an unacceptable way when visiting her client's home.

She said both men were drinking and matters escalated and it was not clear how the final injury to the back occurred.



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They're still just like nothing on Earth

Punk icons The Stranglers are back on the road following the sell-out success of last year's Black and White Tour. They are taking their Classic Collection around the UK, to coincide with the planned re-release of the entire Stranglers studio album catalogue from 1977 to 1982.

Fans can look forward to a slew of greatest hits when the band headline Birmingham's O2 Academy on Saturday. It's a show that The Stranglers are also looking forward to.

Bassist Jean-Jacques Burnel says: "We've had some amazing times in the Black Country and Birmingham and around and about. We always have a great time when we're on the road and it's always sold out when we play in Brum. Our drummer, Jim, lives in that neck of the woods.

"We've got a very loyal audience but there's also a sense of renewal of the audience. People who've grown up with us and remember times past are still there.

"They remember the problems of us being a young punk band. It seems to be that for some reason a lot of teenagers are also starting to check us out over the past 10 years. You know, with the last three albums, people have really picked up on us again.

"Also, all the bad press that we had all those years ago seems to be a badge of honour because everything is so cynical and phoney these days. All the bad times are now a badge of honour. It's funny. We were the threat to western civilisation and morality and now we're seen as a healthy thing because the music scene is all so sterile."

Drawing from an expansive and impressive catalogue that spans some 40 years, The Stranglers will enthral audiences with an exciting mix of material, all bearing the distinctive signature style of this most enduring of British bands – driving rhythms, anthemic melodies, quirky time signatures and occasional dark humour, held together by those trademark rumbling bass lines and swirling keyboards.

WAVE

The Stranglers are riding high on the crest of a resurgent wave of popularity. They continue to out-rock many on the live circuit, including much younger bands, and their existing large and loyal fan base has swelled in recent years as new converts join the ranks.

With record-breaking, sell-out shows and festival appearances throughout the UK and the rest of the world, public demand to hear and see the group has never been so high; true testament to their considerable musical talent and the enduring quality of their songs.

JJ says it's been a struggle and they're thrilled to be winning the war.

"Well, we've been used to wars from day one. We didn't have a ready-made audience in the very early days. Even when we were playing pubs we were having confrontations with the landlord calling the police to pull the plug.

"In the very early days, people were also getting offended by what we were playing. We had people try to get on stage and whack us. We had, once, an agent who booked us for one show. They booked us for a Young Conservatives night in Purley, in South London.

"We were dressed in rags and tatters and there were all these people in smoking jackets and

No more heroes – The Stranglers are heading to Birmingham



suits and bow ties. It was evidently obvious that we weren't going to get on with each other. Jet went on stage and said you're not going to like us and there was a bit of language. So one guy came up on stage with a bow tie but we kicked him off stage and 400 people left the hall, leaving five who thought we were brilliant. I think we did play for the five to get our fee."

JJ is pleased that the band's recorded output from an imperious late 1970s and early 1980s is being re-aired.

"It was a very intense and fast period from having overnight been the pariahs and then breaking all kinds of records and selling records and having an audience who wanted to see us rather than murder us. It was very creative for us back then. We were just writing all the time.

"There was pent up frustration and energy and we wanted to explore our

The bad press that we had all those years ago is a badge of honour

potential. We weren't satisfied. Suddenly we had a bit of a hit, we wanted to go further. We wanted to see what we could as artists, what we could do. As our experiences expanded and our horizon, so did our attempts to try and improve. In the first 18 months we had three albums out, all top three. The first three years were really slow and doubts crept into our mind about doing the right thing. Then things happened suddenly but overnight it changed. We were living off Paxo sage and onion stuffing when no girlfriend meant no food or drink."

Remarkably, the band are more popular than ever. And they have offers to tour the world. The band pick and choose what they want to do – turning down things that are too much bother.

"We have to decide whether we want to go somewhere. Every time we turn down the USA they double the offer. There are a few places we're not too keen on going to. The Americans want you to queue up for the American embassy and be interrogated about why we want to go there. You can't make a joke. So we don't accept the offers."

Andy Richardson

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Shropshire Star every Friday.

Poignant play focuses on cruel condition

Youngsters have given a thumbs-up to a heart-warming play about the impact of dementia seen through the eyes of a young boy.

Pupils of Llanfair Caereinion Primary School attended a performance of Wy, Chips A Nain – Egg, Chips and Grandma – at Theatr Clwyd in Mold.

The play tells the moving story of young Guto and how the cruel condition affects his relationship with his beloved grandmother. The production is on a nationwide tour that's been sponsored by the award-winning Pendine Park which has eight care homes including some near the Shropshire border. It specialises

in looking after people with dementia. Writer, Gwyneth Glyn visited one of the homes to speak to the residents and staff as part of her research.

The result is a co-production between Welsh language theatre company Frwn Wen and Galeri Caernarfon. Llanfair Caereinion pupils Seren Walton, 10, and Rhys Edwards, 11, were among the audience in the Emllyn Williams Theatre for the performance and afterwards Seren said: "I really enjoyed it but it was very emotional. I really understood what they went through." Rhys added: "It was sad but funny at the same time. It gave us a real feel for how it affects people who are getting older and the people

who live with them. Author Gwyneth said: "Telling the story through the eyes of a young boy means it isn't a dark story and because it's important to offer the audience some light, hope and humour.

"Guto goes to his Nain's for tea after school and always enjoys egg and chips.

"It's through this every day event of cooking egg and chips that we see the condition develop and how he sees the adult looking after him deteriorating due to her dementia. The ending is, I hope, poignant but full of hope.

"I really wanted to get the message across that dementia doesn't mean the end of a relationship but instead, in many ways, it enriches lives."



Coming soon...

Spectators to race in for track day

Motor sport enthusiasts in Shropshire are being invited to attend the county's top venue for free when Loton Park Hill Climb stages its first meeting of the year on Easter Sunday, April 1.

The high speed event takes place in the grounds of stately home Loton Park, in the village of Alberbury, north west of Shrewsbury, and will see a wide range of sports, classic, saloon and racing cars competing against the clock along the tight and demanding tarmac course through the deer park.

Martyn Silcox, secretary of event organisers Hagley Car Club, said: "This promises to be yet another very competitive season with several exciting new driver and car combinations appearing for the very first time. As a goodwill gesture the club has decided to offer free admission to spectators for the first event on Easter Sunday, so we hope that lots of people will come along and take the opportunity to see the action, as parking is also free and full catering facilities are on site."

Local driver and former British Champion Alex Summers, of Tenbury Wells, added: "Loton Park is now looking in really great shape and with the course having been completely resurfaced last year we can expect much faster times and new records galore this season as the track has now bedded in, so I think visitors will be most impressed and enjoy the spectacle."

Further details can be found at www.hdlcc.com.

Dusty's music on stage

A musical featuring the soulful music of Dusty Springfield is being performed in Shrewsbury this week.

Soap opera favourites Michelle Gayle, right, and Alice Barlow are starring in Son of a Preacher Man at Theatre Severn.



The story focuses on a swinging Soho joint where the hip kids danced 1960s nights away to the latest crazes and tunes, while the legendary owner, the Preacher Man himself, dispensed advice to young hearts longing for love.

Lead performer Michelle Gayle, an actress and singer best known for her roles in Grange Hill and EastEnders, stars as Alison. S

he is joined by Alice Barlow, best-known for her roles on Coronation Street and Benidorm, who plays Kat.

Strictly Come Dancing's Craig Revel Horwood, who is the musical's director and choreographer, said: "I am delighted to bring to life for the very first time this wonderful story created by Warner Brown, with soulful songs from the legendary Dusty Springfield's iconic music catalogue."

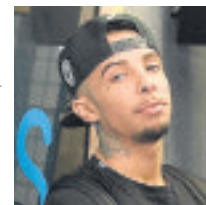
He added: "I hope that audiences in Shrewsbury will come to love this warm-hearted and uplifting new musical as much as I do." Tickets for Son of a Preacher Man at Theatre Severn are on sale now. They can be booked online at theatresevern.co.uk, by telephone on 01743 281281 and from the venue Box Office.

Festival will have dance contest

A music festival for Oswestry is continuing to increase its line-up by adding a unique dance competition.

Fieldbounce Music Festival will take place for the first time on May 5, with the line-up already boasting the likes of Scouting for Girls, Fuse ODG, Dappy, Danny Howard and Bez from the Happy Mondays. Now organisers are putting on a dance competition called 'Stomp The Yard'. The competition will take place during the early afternoon and will involve dance schools from the North West and Midlands regions. It is being run by Chloe Yeomans, a local dance teacher with over 10 years experience in the industry. She said: "Providing performers with the opportunity to compete at a music festival alongside well-known artists will be an amazing opportunity." Trophies, gifts and cash prizes will be handed to winners and runners-up. Shawn Melusi, CEO of Fieldbounce said: "Stomp The Yard will add a unique element to the festival and is also a chance to manifest our local talent."

Email chloe.e.yeomans@hotmail.com for more details.



Sculptor Alfie prepares for big show in capital

The sculptor behind the iconic Knife Angel is busy preparing a number of works to take to an event in London later this year.

Alfie Bradley, from Oswestry, has created a number of spectacular sculptures, including the Knife Angel and a spoon gorilla which both sit in the grounds of the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry.

Now Mr Bradley, who works from an industrial unit, is busy preparing a number of sculptures and canvases for the show in Chelsea, where he is looking to create new contacts and hopefully sell some of his artwork. He said: "It is a chance to get into the art dealer world, and meet dealers down there, but also other artists who you can exchange tips with and ideas, which can only be a good thing.

"Hopefully when I am down there I can sell a few pieces of my work.

"I'm taking down the elephant's head I have made, a shark head which is made out of a walnut tree, and then I have four canvases to finish off which I am taking with me."

Mr Bradley is currently working on a sculpture which has been made to represent the troubles happening in Syria. He added: "It is of a boy wearing a gas mask with his finger pointing to the sky, to represent the troubles that have been happening in Syria for many years with all the warfare that's been going on.

"I also made a bear out of metal that is at The Sweeney Hall Hotel.

"I've put it there so it goes a nice brown colour, then I can re-do all the features on it before going down to Chelsea."

Mr Bradley will be showing his work alongside other artists from around the country at the event from April 11 to 15.

Alfie Bradley at work on his new creation



* A SPRING tea dance will be held at the Llanwddyn Community Centre on Easter Sunday. The event aims to take people back to the days of afternoon tea and vintage china. Ruth Powell, one of the organisers from Llanwddyn Events, said: "It has to be one of the most delightful ways of spending a springtime Easter Sunday afternoon. We are urging people to put on their best dancing shoes, Sunday frock and come along and enjoy a dance, a waltz, quickstep, jive, tango, or foxtrot." She said the music would be provided by the DJ, Power of Sound who has provided the entertainment at three previous popular events. She said: "Whether you dance or watch you can do so whilst you

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work your way through a lovely afternoon tea." Llanwddyn Events is known for organising a folk and acoustic weekend, the annual ball and being involved in the bonfire and fireworks night. Tickets are £8 and include afternoon tea. Proceeds from the event will pay for the springtime and summer flowers on display annually around Llanwddyn village. To book tickets call 01691 870501 or email info@llanwddynevents.co.uk

* OSWESTRY library has introduced a new session for pre-school age children. The library in Arthur Street

is holding Rhyme & Story times every Monday during term times from 2pm to 2.30pm. Library staff say they expect the free sessions will become popular with both the young children and the parents or carers. Debbie Marais from the library said: "These free sessions are for children from babies to four-year-olds, their parents and carers. They are a great way to make new friends and enjoy stories, nursery rhymes and simple action songs. We look forward to seeing people old and new in the library." She said that there would no longer be Friday story times held in the library. Oswestry Library holds a wide range of events for library users of all ages. More details are available at the library.

* THE man who bought an ancient woodland will give a talk in Shropshire. Richard Fortey, natural historian and former professor of palaeontology at London's Natural History Museum, is well known for writing books and presenting BBC TV documentaries including The Secret Life of Rock Pools and Fossil Wonderlands. He will give a talk in the Methodist Church Hall, Castle Street, Oswestry, on Wednesday next week about the life and history of his four-acre ancient woodland in Buckinghamshire.

The talk has been arranged by the Oswestry Branch of Shropshire Wildlife Trust. Doors open at 7pm. Entry £2 for trust members, £3 for non-members. All are welcome.

March 17



Pointless Celebrities
7.20pm
Sam Nixon and Mark Rhodes, Ellie Taylor and Milton Jones, Jay Rayner and Thomasina Miers, and Paul Martin and Sara Pascoe take part in the general knowledge quiz.

BBC1	
6.00	Breakfast.
10.00	Saturday Kitchen Live. Host Matt Tebbutt is joined by chefs Ian Orr and Jose Pizarro, and special guest Amanda Redman. Plus archive clips featuring Rick Stein and Raymond Blanc.
11.30	Classic Mary Berry. A range of recipes inspired by produce grown in Britain. (R)
12.00	Football Focus. Dan Walker and guests review the week's headlines and look ahead to forthcoming fixtures, including the FA Cup quarter-finals and today's four Premier League games.
1.00	BBC News; Weather.
1.15	MasterChef. Seven more contenders compete in the cookery challenge, with their first task being to invent and then cook one dish using ingredients from the MasterChef Market. (R)
2.15	MasterChef. Seven more amateur cooks create a dish from a selection of poussin, beef cheeks, pork mince, mackerel and tiger prawns, before cooking for the 2012 and 2006 champions. (R)
3.15	MasterChef. The week's best amateurs are challenged to make their best comfort food dish. (R)
3.45	Wanted Down Under Revisited. Nicki Chapman catches up with North Yorkshire family the Wilsons, who sampled life in Australia in 2010 when they spent a week living in Gold Coast, Queensland.
4.30	Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Wales v France (Kick-off 5.00pm). John Inverdale presents coverage of the final match of the tournament, which takes place at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff.
7.00	BBC News.
7.10	Midlands Today; Weather.
7.20	Pointless Celebrities. Sam Nixon and Mark Rhodes, Ellie Taylor and Milton Jones, Jay Rayner and Thomasina Miers, and Paul Martin and Sara Pascoe take part in the general knowledge quiz.
8.10	Casualty. Rash's new-found confidence is tested when he treats a prisoner, who also leads Gem into danger. Bea goes up against smarmy F1 Eddie for a place on a coveted training course.
9.00	Troy: Fall of a City. Paris flees to the hills in which he grew up as he seeks safe refuge from the Greeks, and back in Troy, Helen is left without a single ally as Pandarus's investigation gathers pace.
10.00	BBC News; Weather; National Lottery Update.
10.20	Match of the Day. Highlights of Bournemouth v West Bromwich Albion, Huddersfield Town v Crystal Palace, Stoke City v Everton and Liverpool v Watford in the Premier League.
11.20	MOTD: FA Cup Highlights. Highlights of Swansea City v Tottenham Hotspur at the Liberty Stadium and Manchester United v Brighton & Hove Albion at Old Trafford.
11.50	FILM: Gambit (2012). A put-upon art expert plans revenge on a millionaire by tricking him into buying a fake Monet painting. Comedy remake, starring Colin Firth.
1.10	Weather for the Week Ahead.
1.15	BBC News.



Dad's Army
8.30pm
Mainwaring and the platoon are asked to provide a guard of honour for a train carrying George VI passing through Walmington-on-Sea, but another locomotive confounds their plans.

BBC2	
6.10	The Wonder of Animals. Chris Packham delves beneath a snake's skin. (R)
6.40	Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. Naomi Wilkinson examines wildlife in California. (R)
7.10	The Pets Factor.
7.30	The Dengineers.
8.00	Absolute Genius: Monster Builds.
8.30	Beyond Bionic.
9.00	Robot Wars. Eight teams enter the third heat. (R)
10.00	Gorilla Family and Me. Part two of two. Gordon Buchanan revisits the apes. (R)
11.00	Homes Under the Hammer. Featuring properties in Kent and Stoke. (R)
11.35	Cats v Dogs: Which Is Best? Part two of two. The pets are tested in five more skills. (R)
12.35	Orson Welles: Talking Pictures. Profile of American actor and director Orson Welles. (R)
1.20	FILM: Waterloo (1970). Historical drama, starring Rod Steiger.
3.30	Me and My Dog: The Ultimate Contest. Dog owners and their pets compete in a bid to make it to the grand final. (R)
4.30	Final Score. A round-up of this afternoon's football results.
5.30	The Repair Shop. An antique plate camera and a violin are restored. (R)
6.00	Hugh's Wild West. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall explores the Somerset Levels, where he visits Worthy Farm, home to Glastonbury Festival, before heading to the Secret World Rescue Centre.
7.00	Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby. Giles Coren and Monica Galetti head to the foothills of the Swiss Alps to experience health and wellness tourism at the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz. (R)
8.00	David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. The naturalist investigates whether animals and plants have developed an awareness of mathematics, including bamboos that flower exactly the same around the world.
8.30	Dad's Army. Mainwaring and the platoon are asked to provide a guard of honour for a train carrying George VI passing through Walmington-on-Sea, but another locomotive confounds their plans. (R)
9.00	FILM: Suite Francaise (2014). Premiere. Passion develops between a woman and the Nazi officer stationed in her home during Germany's occupation of France. Second World War drama, starring Kristin Scott Thomas.
10.40	Performance Live: Winged Bull in the Elephant Case. An immersive performance, combining dance choreographed by Wayne McGregor and others with music and spoken word, filmed underground and in London's National Gallery.
11.10	FILM: Defiance (2008). Three Jewish brothers escape into the forests during the Nazi invasion of Poland and form a resistance movement. Second World War drama, starring Daniel Craig and Jamie Bell.
1.15	Civilisations. (R)
2.15	This Is BBC2.



Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
7pm
The duo are joined by guests George Ezra, Ashley Banjo and Jordan Banjo, while Stephen Mulhern and Scarlett Moffatt lend a hand with the games.

ITV	
6.00	CITV: Sooty 6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids 6.20 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures 6.50 Super 4 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story 7.05 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
7.30	Scrambled!: Scrambled! Two hours of children's fun.
7.35	Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
7.50	Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. When the girls disobey the Professor and swing all the way over the swingset, they must deal with unexpected consequences. (R)
8.10	Scrambled!: The Bagel and Becky Show. Offbeat animated comedy following a mismatched brother and sister. (R)
8.30	Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! Adventures with the Scooby gang. (R)
9.05	Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R)
9.25	James Martin's Saturday Morning. With guests Kim Wilde and Stephen Terry.
11.20	Britain's Brightest Family. Two families compete in the first of the quarter-finals. (R)
11.50	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
12.00	Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Italy v Scotland (Kick-off 12.30pm).
2.25	Live Six Nations Rugby Union. England v Ireland (Kick-off 2.45pm). Mark Pougatch presents all the action from the final match of the tournament for both sides, which takes place at Twickenham.
5.00	The Chase. Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
6.00	ITV News Central; Weather.
6.15	New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, including footage of a golfer being surprised by an alligator, and a child being fired into a belfry.
6.30	Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. The duo are joined by guests George Ezra, Ashley Banjo and Jordan Banjo, while Stephen Mulhern and Scarlett Moffatt lend a hand with the games.
8.30	The Voice UK. The first of the knockout shows as 12 acts sing for a place in the semi-finals. Guests include Craig David, members of the Black Eyed Peas and Kylie Minogue.
10.30	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.45	FILM: Fast & Furious (2009). A fugitive and an FBI agent are forced to work together once again to bring a killer to justice. Thriller sequel, with Vin Diesel, Paul Walker and Michelle Rodriguez.
12.45	Play to the Whistle. Holly Willoughby returns with the sports-themed comedy panel show, as Frank Lampard and Bradley Walsh are joined by Richard Osman, Tom Daley and Rob Beckett. (R)
1.30	Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
3.00	Babushka. Game show hosted by Rylan Clark-Neal in which contestants open a set of giant Russian nesting dolls, with some empty and others containing prizes up to £10,000. (R)
3.50	ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.



Penelope Keith's Coastal Villages
7pm
The actress discovers the idyllic coastal villages of East Anglia. She travels by train to the Edwardian holiday resort of Weybourne.

Channel 4	
6.00	Winter Paralympics Live. Coverage of day eight from PyeongChang, South Korea, which features wheelchair curling, alpine skiing, and cross-country skiing.
8.00	Winter Paralympics Breakfast. Action from day eight in PyeongChang, South Korea.
9.00	Frasier. The shrink arranges a date for Daphne. (R)
9.30	Frasier. Niles prepares for the demands of fatherhood. (R)
10.00	Frasier. Martin's favourite bar is set to be demolished. (R)
10.30	The Big Bang Theory. The boys are challenged to a robot duel. (R)
10.55	The Big Bang Theory. Sheldon develops a scientific procedure for making friends. (R)
11.25	The Big Bang Theory. Sheldon lends Penny money to pay her rent. (R)
11.55	The Simpsons. Mr Burns chooses an heir. (R)
12.25	The Simpsons. Bart's antics get Principal Skinner fired. (R)
12.55	The Simpsons. Bart faces a dilemma. (R)
1.25	FILM: Casper (1995). The daughter of a paranormal expert befriends the amiable ghost of a young boy, but finds other spooks are not so friendly. Family comedy, with Christina Ricci and Bill Pullman.
3.20	A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. Toby Anstis and his twin sister Kate look for a property on Ibiza. (R)
4.25	The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R)
5.30	Winter Paralympics Today. A round-up of action from day eight in PyeongChang, South Korea.
6.30	Channel 4 News.
7.00	Penelope Keith's Coastal Villages. The actress discovers the idyllic coastal villages of East Anglia, where she is plunged into tales of bravery, scandal and intrigue.
8.00	Britain at Low Tide. Tori Herridge explores the Severn Estuary, visiting the site of a medieval village that disappeared into the sea and finding out how important the ferry crossing at Aust once was.
9.00	FILM: Fantastic Four (2015). Premiere. Four scientists return from another dimension granted unusual powers, which they use to defend the Earth. Superhero adventure, starring Miles Teller and Michael B Jordan.
10.55	8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jon Richardson and Michelle Wolf take on guest captain Jonathan Ross with Johnny Vegas, while three-man comedy act Pappy's helps out in Dictionary Corner. Last in the series. (R)
11.55	The Inbetweeners. The friends prepare for their exams. Simon makes progress with Carl by helping her revise, and the gang members get together to reminisce about the past year. (R)
12.30	Winter Paralympics Live. Coverage of day nine from PyeongChang, South Korea, which features alpine skiing, cross-country skiing and ice hockey.
5.35	Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer go house-hunting in London, where newlyweds Daniel and Jennie are on the lookout for a home in the north of the city. (R)



Football on 5: The Championship
9pm
Colin Murray introduces highlights of the weekend's games, including Leeds United v Sheffield Wednesday at Elland Road and Barnsley v Millwall at Oakwell.

Channel 5	
6.00	Milkshake!: Little Princess 6.10 Wissper 6.20 The Mr Men Show 6.30 Milkshake! Monkey 6.35 The Secret Life of Puppies 6.40 Mofy 6.45 Simon 6.50 Simon 7.00 Peppa Pig 7.05 Paw Patrol 7.15 Thomas & Friends 7.30 Fireman Sam 7.40 Olly the Little White Van 7.50 Blaze and the Monster Machines 8.20 Paw Patrol 8.35 Nella the Princess Knight 8.50 Noddy: Toyland Detective 9.05 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 9.20 Shimmer and Shine 9.35 Digby Dragon 9.50 Peppa Pig 10.00 Peppa Pig
10.05	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Donatello's grudge against Don Vizioso jeopardises the turtles' mission. (R)
10.35	The Gadget Show. A new model laser projector is pitted against a top-notch TV to see how they compare. (R)
11.35	Police Interceptors. Kev Salter and Ian Squire hunt for a man roaming the streets with a machete. (R)
12.35	Police Interceptors. Damien Stevens draws his stun gun on an aggressive driver. (R)
1.30	Police Interceptors. Damo Stevens pursues a heroin dealer. (R)
2.30	The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. A man subjected to a campaign of harassment by his neighbour. (R)
3.30	The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. A pensioner who faced months of vandalism and abuse from his neighbour. (R)
4.30	Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Paul and Steve call for police back-up at a flat in London's Docklands. (R)
5.25	Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Paul, Steve and Ben make a shocking discovery when they break into a home. (R)
6.25	5 News Weekend.
6.30	FIA Formula E Live. The Punta del Este ePrix. Vernon Kay presents coverage of the sixth round of the campaign, which is held in Punta del Este, Uruguay.
8.10	Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Documentary giving an insight into the world of debt collection from the perspectives of people who owe money, their creditors and those who collect the payments. (R)
9.00	Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights of the weekend's games, including Leeds United v Sheffield Wednesday at Elland Road and Barnsley v Millwall at Oakwell.
9.55	Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, including Oxford United v Peterborough United and Rochdale v AFC Wimbledon.
10.30	Live: Hayemaker Fight Night. Matt Askin v Stephen Simmons and Joe Joyce v Donnie Palmer. Coverage of the respective cruiserweight and heavyweight bouts, which take place at the York Hall in Bethnal Green.
12.00	SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming.
3.10	Cowboy Builders. (R)
4.00	Cowboy Builders. (R)
4.45	House Doctor. (R)
5.10	House Busters. (R)
5.35	Wildlife SOS. (R)

March 18

sunday



Hold the Sunset

8pm

Bob suggests that Roger apply to become his mother's paid carer - but the only problem is that she is in perfect health, so he needs someone more in need of support to pose as her.



Top Gear

8pm

Matt tests the world's fastest-accelerating car, with a little help from NASA. Chris pens a heartfelt love letter to the Citroen 2CV, while Rory samples some exciting cars from South Korea.



Celebrity Catchphrase

7pm

Stephen Mulhern hosts a celebrity special of the guessing game, challenging Chris Kamara, Stacey Solomon and Catherine Tyldesley to see it and say it.



13 Commandments

10.05pm

New series. A provincial Belgian town is rocked by the murder of a 16-year-old girl and the case takes a shocking turn. Crime thriller, starring Dirk Van Dijk. In Flemish.



The Equalizer

9pm

An ex-secret agent fights to bring down a crime syndicate after coming to the aid of an abused prostitute. Action thriller, with Denzel Washington and Chloe Grace Moretz.

BBC1

- 6.00 Breakfast.**
- 7.25 Match of the Day.** Highlights of Bournemouth v West Bromwich Albion, Huddersfield Town v Crystal Palace, Stoke City v Everton and Liverpool v Watford in the Premier League. (R)
- 8.30 MOTD: FA Cup Highlights.** Highlights of Swansea City v Tottenham Hotspur at the Liberty Stadium and Manchester United v Brighton & Hove Albion at Old Trafford. (R)
- 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show.**
- 10.00 The Big Questions.** Nicky Campbell presents moral and religious discussions on topical issues, live from the University of Sussex, Brighton.
- 11.00 Sunday Politics West Midlands.** The week's events at Westminster, presented by Sarah Smith. Including a regional round-up.
- 12.15 Lifeline.** Anita Dobson appeals on behalf of Phab.
- 12.25 Songs of Praise.** The Rev Kate Bottley celebrates spring on a Christian farm in Derbyshire, JB Gill meets a couple preparing for their wedding and Billy Graham is remembered.
- 1.00 BBC News; Weather.**
- 1.15 MOTD Live: The FA Cup.** Wigan Athletic v Southampton (Kick-off 1.30pm). Coverage of the third quarter-final clash, which takes place at the DW Stadium, as the League One side look to cause another upset.
- 3.35 A Question of Sport.** Sue Barker asks the questions in the light-hearted quiz, with celebrity guests joining team captains Matt Dawson and Phil Tufnell. (R)
- 4.05 MOTD Live: The FA Cup.** Leicester City v Chelsea (Kick-off 4.30pm). Gary Lineker presents all the action from the fourth quarter-final, which takes place at the King Power Stadium.
- 6.35 BBC News.**
- 6.50 Midlands Today; Weather.**
- 7.00 Countryfile.** Ellie Harrison assesses the effects of recent storms on Pembrokeshire's coastline, while Adam Henson visits Scotland's Rural College to explore farming's impact on global warming.
- 8.00 Hold the Sunset.** Bob suggests that Roger apply to become his mother's paid carer - but the only problem is that she is in perfect health, so he needs someone more in need of support to pose as her.
- 8.30 FILM: Brooklyn (2015).** Premiere. An Irish immigrant starts a new life in 1950s New York, but her past catches up with her and she faces a harsh choice. Drama, starring Saoirse Ronan and Domhnall Gleeson.
- 10.10 BBC News.**
- 10.30 Midlands Today; Weather.**
- 10.40 Paddy McGuinness' Sport Relief Warm Up.** The host rows, walks and jogs from his home to the Sport Relief studio in Salford, and along the way looks at highlights from past events and offers previews of Sport Relief 2018.
- 11.40 FILM: The Sentinel (2006).** A secret service agent is framed for murder as he tries to expose a neo-Nazi militant who has infiltrated the White House. Spy thriller, with Michael Douglas.
- 1.20 Weather for the Week Ahead.**
- 1.25 BBC News.**

BBC2

- 6.05 Coast.** The culture, history and legends of Britain's islands. (R)
- 7.05 The Instant Gardener.** Transforming a roof terrace in Basingstoke. (R)
- 7.50 Gardeners' World.** Advice on how to plant bare-root trees. (R)
- 8.20 Countryfile.** The team heads to the Scottish Lowlands to explore the Lothians and the Borders. (R)
- 9.15 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.** Highlights of the series, with Matt Tebbutt.
- 10.45 Spring Kitchen with Tom Kerridge.** With guests Paul Young and Paul Ainsworth. (R)
- 11.30 Lorraine Pascale: How to Be a Better Cook.** The food writer helps a mother-of-three and foster carer. (R)
- 12.00 Escape to the Country.** Jules Hudson helps a couple in West Sussex. (R)
- 12.45 The Ladykillers: Pest Detectives.** Imogen is called to one of the worst infestations of clothes moths she has ever seen. (R)
- 1.45 Pilgrimage: The Road to Santiago.** Seven celebrities tackle a medieval pilgrimage. (R)
- 2.45 Money for Nothing.** Sarah Moore transforms items including a floral carpet reclaimed from a tip. (R)
- 3.45 The World's Most Extraordinary Homes.** Piers Taylor and Caroline Quentin explore four extraordinary homes in Japan. (R)
- 4.45 Back in Time for Tea.** The Ellis family reflects on their time-travelling adventure. (R)
- 5.45 FILM: Catch Me If You Can (2002).** Fact-based drama, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks.
- 8.00 Top Gear.** Matt LeBlanc tests the world's fastest-accelerating car, with a little help from NASA. Dara O Briain and Ed Byrne are the studio guests.
- 9.00 Famously Unfit for Sport Relief.** Entertainer Les Dennis, presenter Susannah Constantine, actress Tameka Empson and comedian Miles Jupp embark on a muscle-grinding mission to regain their fitness.
- 10.00 The Mash Report.** Nish Kumar and a cast of comedy correspondents present the satirical and surreal take on the week's news. (R)
- 10.30 Top Gear: Extra Gear.** Rory Reid puts his engineering skills to the challenge of building a rear wheel drive car. With guests touring car champion Colin Turkington and comedian Brennan Reece.
- 10.55 Women's Six Nations Highlights.** Action from the final round of fixtures, which were England v Ireland at the Ricoh Arena, Wales v France at Parc Eirias and Italy v Scotland at the Stadio Plebiscito.
- 11.25 FILM: Being Blacker (2018).** Molly Dineen's documentary about Blacker Dread, a Jamaican-born reggae producer, businessman, father, son and pillar of the community in Brixton.
- 12.55 Sign Zone: Question Time.** (R)
- 1.55 Sign Zone: Holby City.** Roxanna tries to cure Oliver, but in the process opens old wounds, and Donna and Fletcher race to save Ric when they discover a possible clue to his case. (R)
- 2.55 This is BBC2.** Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC2.

ITV

- 6.00 CITV: Sooty 6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids 6.20 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures 6.50 Super 4 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story 7.05 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution**
- 7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show.** (R)
- 7.50 Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go!** The teenage superheroes fight to save the world. (R)
- 8.10 Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series.** (R)
- 8.30 Scrambled!: Spy School.** Spy-themed game show in which two friends work together to foil the plans of evil mastermind Goldfish.
- 9.05 Scrambled!: Wishfart.** (R)
- 9.25 Scrambled!: Wishfart.** (R)
- 9.30 Love Your Garden.** Transforming a retired serviceman's Surrey garden. (R)
- 10.00 Peston on Sunday.** Political magazine.
- 10.55 The Voice UK.** The first of the knockout shows. (R)
- 12.55 ITV News and Weather; Weather.**
- 1.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway.** With guests George Ezra, Ashley Banjo and Jordan Banjo. (R)
- 2.30 What Would Your Kid Do?** Parents guess what their children will do in entertaining situations. Last in the series. (R)
- 3.30 The Harbour.** The crowds arrive for the Easter weekend and Whitsun holidays. (R)
- 4.00 Tipping Point.** Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard. (R)
- 5.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special.** With contestants Louise Hazel, Joel Dommett, Sinitta and Les Dennis. (R)
- 6.00 Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs.** An abandoned puppy is brought in with a skin condition that is so severe the vets are unable to determine its breed, and Paul tries to prepare his dog for a neutering operation. (R)
- 6.30 ITV News and Weather.**
- 6.45 ITV News Central; Weather.**
- 7.00 Celebrity Catchphrase.** Stephen Mulhern hosts a celebrity special of the guessing game, challenging Chris Kamara, Stacey Solomon and Catherine Tyldesley to see it and say it.
- 8.00 The Durrells.** New series. In the first episode of a new series, the family are surprised to find out that Leslie has three different girlfriends, and Aunt Hermione arrives in Corfu for good.
- 9.00 The Good Karma Hospital.** New series. Ruby works her first solo night shift, but a storm hits Barco and her medical skills are stretched to the limits. Return of the medical drama, starring Amrita Acharia.
- 10.05 ITV News and Weather; Weather.**
- 10.20 Peston on Sunday.** Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston, with Allegra Stratton. (R)
- 11.15 Six Nations Highlights.** Jill Douglas presents action from the final round of fixtures, featuring England v Ireland, Wales v France and Italy v Scotland.
- 12.10 Marcella.** (R)
- 1.00 Jackpot247.**
- 3.00 Take on the Twisters.** (R)
- 3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**
- 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R)

Channel 4

- 6.30 Everybody Loves Raymond.** Michael embarrasses the family. (R)
- 6.55 Everybody Loves Raymond.** Frank becomes jealous of Marco and Marie's friendship. (R)
- 7.25 Mobil 1: The Grid.** Including a preview of the Formula One season opener in Australia.
- 8.00 Winter Paralympics Breakfast.** Action from the final day in PyeongChang, South Korea.
- 9.00 Frasier.** The shrink offends his listeners. (R)
- 9.30 Sunday Brunch.** With David Haig, Jared Harris and John Robins.
- 12.30 Winter Paralympics Today.** A round-up of action from the final in PyeongChang, South Korea.
- 2.00 Winter Paralympics Closing Ceremony.** Coverage from PyeongChang Olympic Stadium in South Korea.
- 3.15 FILM: Epic (2013).** Animated adventure, with the voice of Amanda Seyfried.
- 5.15 The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer.** Nick Hewer, Stacey Solomon, Ricky Wilson and Perri Kiely take part. (R)
- 6.30 Channel 4 News.**
- 7.00 Britain's Polar Bear Cub.** Cameras go behind the scenes at the Highland Wildlife Park near Kingussie in Inverness-shire, following efforts to breed the nation's first polar bear cub for 25 years.
- 8.00 Escape to the Chateau.** New series. Series following a family's efforts to restore a French chateau. In the first edition, Dick and Angel have their hands full as they prepare to host seven weddings.
- 9.00 Homeland.** Carrie puts a plan in motion, Saul visits a source and Keane makes a desperate plea. Claire Danes and Mandy Patinkin star.
- 10.05 13 Commandments.** New series. A provincial Belgian town is rocked by the murder of a 16-year-old girl and the case takes a shocking turn. Crime thriller, starring Dirk Van Dijk. In Flemish.
- 11.00 FILM: Solace (2015).** A psychic helps the FBI to identify a serial killer, but realises the murderer has mental powers of his own. Crime thriller, starring Anthony Hopkins and Colin Farrell.
- 12.55 The Last Leg.** With guest Claudia Winkleman. (R)
- 1.50 The Job Interview.** Aston Martin recruits a group leader. (R)
- 2.45 KOTV Boxing Weekly.** Action from bouts to have taken place in Russia, the United States and the UK.
- 3.25 Gillette World Sport.** Including a freestyle swimming lesson with Olympic gold medalist Nathan Adrian.
- 3.55 Undercover: Who's Policing Your Bank? - Channel 4 Dispatches.** An investigation into the Financial Ombudsman. (R)
- 4.25 Location, Location, Location.** Helping two first-time buyers in Manchester. (R)
- 5.20 Food Unwrapped.** Kate Quilton challenges Matt Tebbutt to make crumpets. (R)
- 5.45 Kirstie's Homemade Home.** (R)

Channel 5

- 6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess 6.10 Wissper 6.20 The Mr Men Show 6.30 Milkshake! Monkey 6.35 The Secret Life of Puppies 6.40 Mofy 6.45 Simon 6.50 Peppa Pig 7.00 Paw Patrol 7.10 Thomas & Friends 7.25 Fireman Sam 7.40 Olly the Little White Van 7.50 Blaze and the Monster Machines 8.10 Paw Patrol 8.30 Nella the Princess Knight 8.45 Noddy: Toyland Detective 9.00 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 9.15 Shimmer and Shine 9.30 Digby Dragon 9.45 Peppa Pig 9.50 Peppa Pig**
- 10.00 Football on 5: The Championship.** Colin Murray introduces highlights of the weekend's games. (R)
- 10.55 Football on 5: Goal Rush.** All the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two. (R)
- 11.25 FILM: Getting Even with Dad (1994).** Family comedy, starring Macaulay Culkin and Ted Danson.
- 1.30 FILM: Richie Rich (1994).** Family comedy, starring Macaulay Culkin.
- 3.15 FILM: My Girl (1991).** Drama, starring Anna Chlumsky and Macaulay Culkin.
- 4.15 5 News Update.**
- 4.20 FILM: My Girl (1991).** Concluded.
- 5.20 FILM: Junior (1994).** Comedy, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- 7.20 FILM: Jumper (2008).** A man with the ability to teleport is hunted by a secret religious society determined to wipe out all of his kind. Fantasy thriller, with Hayden Christensen and Samuel L. Jackson.
- 8.55 5 News Weekend.**
- 9.00 FILM: The Equalizer (2014).** An ex-secret agent fights to bring down a crime syndicate after coming to the aid of an abused prostitute. Action thriller, with Denzel Washington and Chloe Grace Moretz.
- 10.00 5 News Update.**
- 10.05 FILM: The Equalizer (2014).** Concluded.
- 11.35 FILM: The Expendables 2 (2012).** The mercenary team battles a rival band of hired guns who have killed one of their number. Action thriller sequel, starring Sylvester Stallone and Jean-Claude Van Damme.
- 1.35 SuperCasino.** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
- 3.10 Cowboy Builders.** Alison Cork and John Russell head to in Kidderminster in Worcestershire to come to the rescue of doting grandparents Brenda and Paul. (R)
- 4.00 World's Most Pampered Pets.** Part two of two. Amy Childs takes her pug Prince shopping in Essex at her favourite pet boutique, and journalist Dara Foster and her canine go to a disco for dogs. (R)
- 4.45 House Doctor.** Ann Maurice and Alistair Appleton renovate neglected hallways in west London and Leeds, and spruce up a bachelor's living room. (R)
- 5.10 House Busters.** Janet Ellis and her team of new-age practitioners suggest ways in which changes to homes could positively affect the lives of their owners. (R)
- 5.35 Wildlife SOS.** Volunteers for the Wildlife Aid Rescue Centre come to the aid of a heron, a grass snake and newborn hedgehogs. (R)

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The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and expects its staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be prepared to undergo Child Protection Screening, including checks with past employers and DBS. References must be sought and verified at the short-listing stage as part of our safeguarding children procedures.

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Kodiatq impresses on snowy slopes

By Sharon Walters

Škoda's Kodiatq has amassed a display case full of major awards since launch and is continuing to do so.

No hit the roads and run out of steam after a few months with gongs dwindling. It continues to improve with more models and options including the latest addition – the luxury with the brand's five or seven-seat SUV gaining the Czech brand's top-end trim level, revealed in full this week at the Geneva Motor Show.

Well awards are impressive but it's when you get behind the wheel that you can judge for yourself on a day-to-day everyday basis.

And I certainly did that in a week in the Edition 2.0 TDi 150PS 4x4 with seven seats – and thank heavens I had that 4x4 capability on one particular day. More of that later.

There's a good range of petrol and diesel engines and trim levels with 2WD, 4WD, manual or DSG automatic transmissions.

Conditions

Drive Mode Select allows the driver to adjust the engine management, gearing ratio and power steering input to suit varying road conditions just at the touch of a finger including eco which really reduces fuel consumption and, what turned out to be so important for me, snow mode.

A trip around the Scottish Highlands was lovely with relatively mild weather for the most part, there was plenty of snow lying on the higher ground but the roads were clear of the white stuff, even on Rannoch Moor.

I stopped at almost the highest point to take some photographs of the car with the mountains in the background – lovely. I jumped back in, drove a few hundred yards



The cabin has good quality finish and trim

and ran into a white out, quite literally with a good covering of snow on the road and I could barely see the sides of the road – which dropped into ditches or steep slopes. I tapped it into snow mode, felt the whole car change its 'attitude' and with care made my way down the ever-steepening slope off the moor until I reach a queue of traffic slewed all over the road, two huge timber lorries unable to make it up the slope with a snow plough and gritter stuck behind. What joy.

With a little wiggling and jiggling, thanks to a very organised fellow driver, space was made for the gritter and plough to get through and my car impressed with its ability to reverse on the deepening snow to make a gap and then creep through as other wheels spun...

Feeling rather smug I made my way on.

The Kodiaq is full of the latest technologies with top level passive safety and impressive advanced assistance systems which do much to reduce accidents. And the car has a full five rating from NCAP in safety ratings.



DRIVEN — AT A GLANCE

Škoda Kodiaq Edition

Engine: 2.0 TDi 150PS 4x4
Transmission: Six-speed manual
Performance: Combined mpg 51.4mpg, CO2 144g/km, max speed 121mph, 0-60mph 9.6 seconds
Price OTR: £33,675, £25,750 with extras

Multi-award winning package from Škoda

activation of the warning hazard lights and interruption of the fuel supply in the event of a collision. Crew Protect Assist closes the windows and sunroof, and tensions the front seat belts in.

You also get numerous cameras as well as radar- and sensor-based systems plus the more usual Adaptive Cruise Control, Lane Assist, Blind Spot Detect, Emergency Assist, Traffic Jam Assist and Traffic Sign Recognition. And that does indeed all add up to a very safe car.

The cabin is high standard with good

quality finish and trim and easy to use sat/nav infotainment and the like. In fact ultra-modern connectivity has been given a high priority in the Kodiaq, with the inclusion of the Škoda Connect online service which integrates all the traffic flow, Google Earth, fuel stops, parking info etc, as well as an automatic emergency call in the event of an accident.

Plus those rear two seats fold very easily totally flat. A real bonus.

The Kodiaq range has a starting price of £22,190 for the S trim, five-seat, 1.4-litre 125ps manual petrol.

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New Ka+ line-up includes crossover

By James Parker

Ford has unveiled its new Ka+ range, which includes an SUV-inspired crossover.

With a larger interior space than its predecessor, and a fresh tech update, the new range of Ford's smallest car goes on sale later this year.

Prices start from £10,795, with the Ka+ plus also available in either Studio or Zetec spec.

Lifestyles

The new Ka+ Active crossover is 23mm higher than its sister model, has a wider chassis, a larger front anti-roll bar, and comes equipped with roof rails – which Ford says supports active lifestyles. 'Unique' 15-inch alloy wheels and Canyon Ridge bronze paint are also offered.

The Ka+ Active is the second Active car to be offered by the American manufacturer, following the launch of the Fiesta Active.

Ford says the new Ka+ Active crossover "further enhances" its compact five-door model, with its price making it more accessible to the wider market.

The new range comes with a choice of powertrains, including Ford's new 1.2-litre, three-cylinder petrol engine – offering 70bhp – and, for the first time on a Ka+ model, a 94bhp 1.5-litre TDCi diesel engine.

Speaking about the inclusion of a crossover in the range, Roelant de Waard, vice president of marketing, sales and service, said: "Last year Ford sold more than 200,000 SUVs in Europe for the first time, and demand for SUV and crossover models has never been higher.

"Our new Ford Ka+ Active model will this year make the crossover affordable



There's now more inside space

to even greater numbers of customers, with aspirational styling, sophisticated technologies customers would expect to see in much more expensive cars."

Other tech includes Ford's SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system via the 6.5-inch touchscreen, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, rain-sensitive wipers, auto headlamps, heated windscreen, heated front seats, climate control, and rear parking sensors.

Mr De Waard said: "Ford has sold more than 61,000 Ka+ models since we first introduced the it in late 2016, and now we're offering customers even more choice with our first Ka+ diesel engine for greater fuel-efficiency and cruising ability, and all-new petrol powertrains that are more responsive in town, all meeting the latest stringent emissions standards."



The new range of Ford's smallest car goes on sale later this year



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AIRDREAM**

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CON, POWER STEERING,
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INSURANCE, IMMACULATE
CONDITION

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IPOD CONNECTION,
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Vauxhall tempts new 18-plate buyers

Vauxhall retailers are offering customers £500 worth of free fuel with 18-plate car and van purchases this weekend, from today to Monday.

And with Vauxhall's new Help to Buy scheme, customers can get more Vauxhall for their money with offers like up to five years 0% APR Flexible Finance, free insurance for a year on selected Corsa models or Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) finance if you like to change your vehicle regularly.

Offer

The £500 free fuel offer is available with any new Vauxhall including best sellers such as Corsa, which celebrates its 25th birthday this year, Astra and Mokka X.

All-new models including the Crossland X and Grandland X SUVs are also included in the offer.

Vauxhall has saved savvy motorists over £37 million on fuel through previous free-fuel campaigns – that's 75,000 happy customers slashing £500 off their fuel bill.

Based on the current average petrol price of 121.9p per litre, £500 buys approximately 90 gallons of fuel.

So customers choosing a Corsa 1.0i Turbo (90PS) three-door with Start/Stop, which achieves 64.2mpg, could enjoy 5,778 miles of motoring on free fuel.

Van buyers can also take advantage of the offer, on purchases across Vauxhall's multi award-winning commercial vehicle range which includes Corsavan, Combo, Vivaro and Movano.

The £500 free fuel offer is available in addition to Vauxhall's other great deals, which



Grandland X SUVs are included



Vauxhall's Corsa – 25 years old this year

include a range of finance offers and flexible PCP finance plans.

Customers can choose from a selection of Vauxhall models with low monthly payments and all the flexibility that PCP finance allows at the end of your chosen term.

"With a host of new models such as Grandland X and Crossland X SUVs, and firm favourites like Corsa and Astra, it has never been a better time to buy a new Vauxhall," said Leon Caruso, Vauxhall's retail sales director.



Buyers can get the £500 free fuel offer on the Mokka

"If you are looking to upgrade your car or your van with a new 18-plate model, our £500 free fuel card and Help to Buy scheme make buying a brand new Vauxhall even more appealing. I encourage you to hot foot it straight away down to your local Vauxhall

retailer to take advantage of this fantastic offer."

The free fuel card offer is available now on all orders between today and Monday. For full terms and conditions please visit www.vauxhall.co.uk or your local Vauxhall retailer.

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61	MERCEDES C200 SE CDI BLUE EFFICIENCY AUTOMATIC, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY 2 KEEPER 73K.....	£9,950
62	KIA SOUL CRDI, SILVER, AIR CONDITIONING, ALLOY WHEELS, SERVICE HISTORY 32K.....	£6,695
11	VOLKSWAGEN POLO SEL TDI 900 1.6 5 DOOR, SILVER, AIR CON., ALLOY WHEELS, SERVICE HISTORY 30 ROAD TAX 58K.....	£6,495
63	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 SXI 5 DOOR, GREY, AIR CON., ALLOY WHEELS, SERVICE HISTORY 34K.....	£5,995
15	PEUGEOT 108 ACTIVE, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY, ONE OWNER 0 ROAD TAX 27K.....	£5,995
60	CITROEN C3 PICASSO 1.6 HDI EXCLUSIVE, MET. GREEN, SERV. HISTORY 30 ROAD TAX 53K.....	SOLD
09	FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 1.6 5 DOOR, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY, ONE OWNER 53K.....	£5,184
61	FIAT 500 LOUNGE, BLUE, FULL SERVICE HISTORY 30 ROAD TAX 35K.....	£4,999
32	FORD KA ZETEC 1.2, SILVER, ALLOY WHEELS, AIR CONDITIONING 30 ROAD TAX 10K.....	£4,995
10	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 SRI 5 DOOR, SILVER, FULL SERVICE HISTORY 58K.....	£4,995
11	FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 1.4, SILVER, ALLOY WHEELS, TINTED GLASS, AIR CON. SERVICED AND TIMING BELT FITTED 63K.....	£4,995
13	FIAT PUNTO JET BLACK, BLACK, 3 DOOR, ALLOY WHEELS, AIR CONDITIONING 34K.....	£4,895
10	FORD FIESTA TITANIUM, BLACK, ALLOY WHEELS, SERVICE HISTORY 60K.....	£4,695
10	CITROEN C3 EXCLUSIVE HDI, BLACK, ALLOY WHEELS, CLIMATE CONTROL, CRUISE CONTROL 20 ROAD TAX 52K.....	£4,695
14	FORD KA STUDIO, BRIGHT RED, FULL SERV. HISTORY, ONE OWNER, 30 ROAD TAX 21K.....	£4,650
08	FORD FOCUS ZETEC AUTOMATIC, SILVER, FULL SERVICE HISTORY 34K.....	£4,495
10	RENAULT CLIO 1.6 INITIALE T-TOM, AUTOMATIC MET. RED, LEATHER SEATS, AIR CONDITIONING, SERVICE HISTORY 46K.....	£4,495
57	MINI HATCH ONE, 6 SPEED, BLACK, SERVICE HISTORY 52K.....	SOLD
08	FORD FOCUS ZETEC, BLUE, SERVICE HISTORY 75K.....	£3,795
11	FIAT PUNTO EVO MYLIFE, RED, FULL SERVICE HISTORY 39K.....	£3,795
11	CITROEN C1 VTR+, WHITE, ALLOY WHEELS, AIR CON., REMOTE CENTRAL LOCKING, SERVICE HISTORY 20 ROAD TAX 28K.....	£3,695
06	HONDA CIVIC E AUTOMATIC, GREY, SERVICE HISTORY 54K.....	£3,695
59	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIVE, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY 76K.....	£3,650
10	TOYOTA AYGO BLACK VVT-1, 1LT., 5 DOOR, BLACK, FULL SERVICE HISTORY, 20 ROAD TAX 48K.....	£3,595
57	RENAULT CLIO CAMPUS 3 DOOR, RED, SERVICE HISTORY 75K.....	£2,195

DUE IN

15	RENAULT CLIO HATCHBACK TCE 90 DYNAMIQUE GT LINE SPORT KIT NAV, 5 DOOR., BLACK, SERVICE HISTORY, 20 ROAD TAX 26K.....	£8,195
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COMMERCIAL VEHICLE NO VAT

63	FORD TRANSIT 350 LWB HIGH TOP RWD, BLUE 110K.....	£3,999
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SPECIAL OFFER PRICE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PLUS VAT

64	FORD TRANSIT CUSTOM 290 TREND E-TEC, WHITE, FRONT AND REAR PARKING SENSORS, COLOUR CODED FRONT BUMPERS, CRUISE CONTROL, SERVICE HISTORY, ONE OWNER 20K.....	£11,495
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COMMERCIALS PLUS VAT

15	TOYOTA HI-LUX 2.5D-4D 4WD ACTIVE, DOUBLE CAB, WHITE, AIR CON. ONE OWNER 19K.....	£14,475
66	FORD TRANSIT 350 L3 H3, WHITE, SIDE DOOR, ONE OWNER 21K.....	£13,995
64	V/W TRANSPORTER T28 STARTLINE TDI, SILVER, ELECTRIC WINDOWS, ONE OWNER 36K.....	SOLD
15	FORD TRANSIT CUSTOM 2.2TDCI 290 L1H1, WHITE, ELEC. WINDOWS, 6 SPEED, SIDE DOOR ONE OWNER 45K.....	£9,875
64	PEUGEOT EXPERT HDI, WHITE, TWIN SIDE DOORS, AIR CON., SHELVE IN REAR 40K.....	£7,595
14	FORD TRANSIT CONNECT 240 L2 LWB, WHITE, TWIN SIDE DOORS, DIRECT FROM NHS ONE OWNER 69K.....	£7,495
15	CITROEN BERLINGO 625 ENTERPRISE, 3 SEATER, WHITE, AIR CONDITIONING, WINDOWS, SIDE DOOR, REAR PARKING SENSORS 19K.....	£6,995
15	CITROEN BERLINGO, WHITE, 3 SEATS, SIDE DOOR, AIR CON., PARKING SENSORS, SERVICE HISTORY 38K.....	£6,795
12	FORD TRANSIT 350 LWB HIGH TOP RWD, 6 SPEED, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY 73K.....	£6,495
60	VAUXHALL VIVARO 2900 CDTI LWB, BLUE, AIR CON., ELEC. WINDOWS, SERVICE HISTORY 49K.....	SOLD
60	FORD TRANSIT 300S, WHITE, TWIN SIDE DOORS, ROOF RACK, RACKING IN REAR, DIRECT FROM BT, SERVICE HISTORY 34K.....	£6,495
63	PEUGEOT PARTNER PROFESSIONAL 1.6 HDI, 3 SEATER, WHITE, SIDE DOOR, AIR CON. ONE OWNER 54K.....	£5,495
62	VOLKSWAGEN CADDY C20 PLUS TDI, WHITE, SIDE DOOR, SERVICE HISTORY 61K.....	£5,495
15	RENAULT KANGOO ML19 1.5 DCI, WHITE, SIDE DOOR ONE OWNER 56K.....	£4,995
14	FIAT DOBLO CARGO 1.3 JTD 90 BHP, WHITE, SIDE DOOR, ELECTRIC WINDOWS 59K.....	£4,495
62	PEUGEOT BIPPER S 1.3 HDI, BLUE, SIDE DOOR, ONE OWNER 60K.....	£3,695

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NEW	RIEJU RS3 125 LC NKO, PRE REGISTERED, INCLUDES FIRST REG. FEE PRE-REGISTERED NEW	£2,495
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New MGs now come with at least a five-year warranty

The entire MG range now comes with its most comprehensive warranty packages ever, with all new MGs receiving at least five years of cover as standard, providing customers with peace-of-mind motoring long after they have driven out of the showroom.

The brand-new Compact-SUV, the MG ZS, leads the way with a seven year/80,000-mile manufacturer warranty.

Genuine

Transferable to any new owner before the limit is reached, the highly-competitive package also guarantees genuine replacement MG parts for the remainder of the agreement.

The rest of the MG range also benefits from enhanced warranty packages.

Announced at the start of the year, the MG3 Supermini saw its warranty extended from three years to five years/60,000 miles, offering a further incentive to purchase this stylish car.

The spacious SUV, the MG GS, is also supported by a five year/80,000 miles warranty.

By offering at least a five year warranty across the range, MG offers longer warranties on its cars than most other manufacturers, going well beyond with a seven year warranty on the ZS.

Daniel Gregorios, head of sales and marketing at MG Motor UK, said: "We believe in the quality of our cars and we always put our customers at the heart of everything we do.



The MG ZS has a seven-year/80,000 mile manufacturer warranty

"That's why our range now have longer warranties, proving that MG cars are not just great value for money but also reliable and well built too". To learn more about the warranties available on the MG range, visit: mg.co.uk/owners/warranty

Welsh Walls, Oswestry SY11 1AW Tel: 01691 655123/07989 612871

Sky Bet League One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Blackburn	32	22	10	5	70	35	68
Shrewsbury	32	21	8	6	47	26	71
Wigan	32	20	11	6	47	26	68
Rotherham	32	19	11	5	56	40	62
Scunthorpe	32	17	15	9	54	44	58
Plymouth	32	16	12	14	44	53	54
Peterborough	32	14	10	17	50	45	53
Cheltenham	32	14	10	11	44	45	51
Bristol Rovers	32	15	16	11	51	53	50
Bradford City	32	14	15	14	48	51	50
Gillingham	32	12	13	11	42	40	49
Blackpool	32	12	13	17	42	47	48
Southend	32	12	9	14	42	54	45
Walsall	32	11	11	15	47	44	44
Doncaster	32	10	13	13	43	44	43
Oxford	32	10	12	15	50	42	42
Blackpool	32	10	13	12	42	47	42
AFC Wimbledon	32	11	8	17	36	47	41
Oldham Athletic	32	10	15	10	50	60	40
Northampton	32	10	17	10	57	39	39
Fleetwood	32	10	8	17	46	57	38
Rochdale	32	7	11	14	39	41	32
MK Dons	32	7	11	17	32	48	32
Bury	32	7	9	19	30	52	30

Vanarama National N

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Harrogate	32	21	5	6	81	39	68
Salisbury City	32	21	4	5	27	68	68
Brackley	32	17	10	4	45	27	61
York City	32	15	8	10	58	45	53
Blyth Spartans	32	17	14	6	67	50	52
Kidderminster	32	13	10	8	52	35	49
AFC Telford	32	14	16	5	53	47	48
Spennymoor	32	17	14	6	7	47	41
Bradford PA	32	12	12	5	53	45	43
Chorley	32	11	12	8	34	28	45
Southport	32	12	8	12	49	55	44
Nuneaton	32	12	8	12	42	44	44
Stockport	32	12	7	12	55	43	43
Darlington	32	11	9	13	44	49	42
Boston	32	10	11	13	48	50	40
Alfreton Town	32	11	5	17	56	58	39
Leamington	32	10	8	14	50	47	39
Curzon Ashton	32	9	10	13	42	51	37
Tamworth	32	10	7	16	45	60	37
FC of Man.	32	10	7	16	45	62	37
AFC Telford	32	10	7	16	45	62	37
Gainsborough	32	10	7	17	39	58	34
N Ferriby	32	2	7	24	17	82	13

Evo-Stik League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Basford United	32	25	5	2	79	27	80
Alvechurch	32	21	7	4	54	34	68
Bedworth United	32	17	10	5	53	37	61
Frickley Athletic	32	18	5	9	83	50	56
Stamford	32	15	10	8	49	29	55
Chaseknot	32	16	4	10	58	48	52
Leek Town	32	14	11	8	52	41	51
Rugby Town	32	14	11	8	52	49	51
Stockbridge	32	29	11	10	59	42	43
Cleethorpe	32	27	15	8	58	33	41
Lincoln United	32	12	4	14	55	64	40
Chadlington	32	11	7	17	47	61	39
Spalding United	32	10	5	15	32	45	35
Loughborough	32	9	7	15	45	65	34
Kidlington	32	25	9	5	11	40	32
Carlisle Town	32	20	9	3	51	21	63
Preston North End	32	20	9	3	51	21	63
Market Drayton	32	17	6	17	27	62	28
Griffith	32	17	6	17	27	62	28
Sheffey	32	17	6	17	27	62	28
Rugby Town	32	17	6	17	27	62	28
Sheffey	32	17	6	17	27	62	28
Sheffey	32	17	6	17	27	62	28

Hallmark Security

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Silsden AFC	29	22	4	1	4	78	26
Litherton	28	20	4	4	83	26	64
Whitchurch A.L.	27	19	3	5	61	21	60
Sandbach	27	19	2	10	59	41	53
St. Andrew's	27	19	2	10	59	41	53
Prestwich Heys	24	15	3	6	58	31	41
AFC Blackpool	27	15	3	9	56	45	48
Alsager Town	26	13	6	7	57	46	45
Carlisle City	26	12	4	11	45	61	40
Heald Old Boys	22	12	4	11	45	61	40
Stockport Town	20	10	6	13	50	52	36
FC Oswestry	29	10	6	13	49	65	33
Altherton L.R.	25	10	2	13	41	45	32
Chesham	24	11	1	12	38	31	24
New Mills	24	9	4	11	44	55	31
Abbey Hulton	25	8	1	15	35	42	30
Eccleshall	27	7	5	15	37	72	26
Walsley	24	7	4	14	41	62	25
Bacup Borough	23	7	2	14	29	52	23
St Helens Town	30	5	2	21	38	73	19
Daisy Hill	26	4	1	17	32	68	17
Nelson	27	3	6	18	28	65	17

Midland Football

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bromsgrove	29	22	4	3	72	31	69
Coventry City	30	20	6	4	72	36	66
Spreading Kestrels	29	18	7	4	61	27	61
Highgate United	27	18	4	5	54	32	58
Worcester City	28	17	6	5	68	33	57
Coventry Sphinx29	24	8	7	5	58	40	50
Rugby Town	30	14	5	11	56	40	47
Heanor Town	28	12	6	10	43	47	42
Long Eaton	31	12	6	13	46	63	42
Coventry United26	12	10	5	14	55	44	40
Bolton	29	11	5	13	44	51	39
FC Wulfs	32	12	3	17	39	64	39
Shephard	25	11	10	5	58	44	37
Westfields	27	11	4	12	59	54	37
Quorn	31	10	5	16	49	71	35
Spenny Swifts	24	8	4	14	41	62	25
Lye Town	30	8	6	16	35	56	30
Loughborough	27	8	6	16	38	50	27
Haughmond	28	6	5	17	34	53	25
Rugby Town	30	14	5	11	56	40	47
Shawbury United27	5	5	17	37	51	20	20
Roceter	26	3	4	19	44	71	13

West Midlands League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Malvern Town	28	19	5	4	85	42	62
B Country Rugby	30	17	8	5	90	46	59
St Albans	29	17	7	5	88	41	58
W Ton Sporting	22	12	2	8	89	18	58
Ellesmere Rangers	27	16	4	7	67	44	52
Bewdley Town	27	15	5	7	67	45	50
Weston Super Mare	26	15	5	6	63	47	50
Cradley Town	25	9	3	19	30	76	18
Stone Old Allie	25	2	18	41	72	17	17
Wellingham Asns	28	1	20	24	111	10	10

Division 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Wern Town	32	20	2	5	84	31	62
Newport Town	32	24	15	5	79	30	68
Gornal Athletic	25	14	4	7	60	38	46
St Martins	24	15	0	9	63	37	45
Darlston T.	23	13	5	5	61	43	44
Team Dudley	22	12	5	5	49	41	41
Old Wulfs	22	11	4	7	32	20	40
Worcester	22	11	5	6	50	44	38
Bromyard T.	23	10	2	11	51	56	32
Tipton Town	23	9	3	11	41	47	30
Bushelme	22	9	1	16	31	56	19
Allscott	23	7	1	13	37	48	24
Wrens Nest	21	7	1	13	31	48	22
Telford Juniors	24	6	2	16	36	63	20
Kington Town	22	5	1	16	31	56	16
Willehall Town	21	2	5	14	24	74	11
Wyrley	22	2	4	16	21	69	10

Division 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Sikh Hunters	22	18	3	1	82	20	57
New Inn	20	10	2	13	48	33	37
Gornal Cops	20	13	4	5	49	48	42
Rock Rovers	18	11	4	3	46	33	37
Wartstone Wale	16	12	0	4	75	38	36
Bewdley T Res.	18	9	6	14	52	33	33
Wander Vauls	24	9	6	14	52	74	24
AFC Billbrook	19	6	4	9	39	45	22
AFC Broseley	18	5	6	7	27	46	21
Church Stretton	18	6	2	10	35	39	20
Ludlow	19	6	2	14	40	34	21
Oldbury United	19	5	4	10	34	49	19
MD Reserves	17	4	4	9	29	50	16
FC Darlaston	20	4	3	13	30	60	15
AFC Bridg Wd	20	2	1	19	18	91	2

Q C Plastering

Bridgnorth Five-A-Side

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
GTE Transport	20	14	2	4	50	21	44
New Inn	20	10	2	13	48	33	37
Down Inn	20	11	0	9	31	27	33
AFC Bridgnorth	20	9	4	7	41	35	31
Alveley	20	9	2	9	32	29	29
Phonics FC	20	9	2	9	31	28	29
Cressage	20	6	12	3	34	34	24
The George	20	2	1	17	17	48	7

Division 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
The Horse	23	16	4	3	56	27	52
Wilton United	23	19	9	4	64	22	45
Buildup 2012	23	10	6	7	44	37	36
Assured FC	23	10	4	8	48	45	34
Claverley	22	8	7	7	33	33	31
Silverthorne OB	23	8	4	11	35	41	26
B.N Corinthians	23	7	13	4	48	22	21
Black Horse	22	4	12	26	20	42	11
West Gate	22	4	5	13	30	50	17

Welsh Premier League

Division 1							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
23	15	5	3	76	27	50	
18	15	1	2	60	17	46	
20	12	3	5	42	30	39	
21	10	4	7	51	39	34	
21	10	4	7	44	35	34	
19	9	6	4	54	28	33	
20	10	2	8	44	41	32	
19	10	1	8	42	35	31	
17	9	3	5	42	27	30	
17	7	4	6	41	32	25	
20	7	0	13	29	40	21	
6	1	11	38	52	19		
16	5	2	9	32	53	17	
16	3	4	9	23	41	13	
19	2	1	16	14	70	7	
20	1	1	18	20	85		

Snow joke as pitches are now left waterlogged

THE football scene continues to be disrupted by the weather as scores of games were called off throughout the region due to unfit surfaces.

After the snow the week before, came the thaw and then the rain which left pitches waterlogged and clubs with little option to postpone yet more fixtures.

Over half the games were cancelled in the Spar Mid Wales League division while the Montgomeryshire League was also badly hit with all the first division games off.

Third placed Guilsfield, looking to step up the pressure in the Huws Gray Cymru Alliance, were again left kicking their heels as their trip to close rivals Holywell Town also succumbed to the elements

Having drawn 2-2 with basement rivals Penrhyncoch in midweek, Caersws again found themselves frustrated by the weather as their home fixture with Ruthin Town was postponed due to waterlogged surface at the Recreation Ground.

The latest call-up leaves the third bottom Bluebirds still with 10 league games to play in the coming weeks, and with a hectic spell looming in their fight for league survival.

Fixtures

Friday

JD Welsh Premier (7.45): The New Saints v Bala Town.

Huws Gray Cymru Alliance (7.45): Airbus Broughton v Denbigh Town.

Saturday

Huws Gray Cymru Alliance (2.30 unless stated): Flint Town United v Holywell Hotspur, Guilsfield v Porthmadog, Holywell Town v Caernarfon Town, Penrhyncoch v Queens Park, Rhyl v Caersws, Ruthin Town v Gresford Athletic (2).

Central Wales Cup quarter-finals (2.30 unless stated): Llanfair United v Knighton Town, Llandrindod Wells v Builth Wells (1).

Spar Mid Wales League (2.30): Division One: Carno v Bow Street, Churchstoke v Borth Utd, Llanidloes Town v Kerry, Machynlleth v Llanhaeadr, Radnor Valley v Berriew, Tywyn Brynrcyn v Welshpool Town. Division Two: Aberystwyth Uni v Hay St Mary's, Dyffryn Eban v Talgarth, Montgomery v Dolgellau, Newbridge v Brecon Northcote, Penybont v Abermule.

Eagles left sidelined by wet weather

IT proved another damp squib for Oswestry whose home tussle with unbeaten leaders Winnington Park was called off due to a waterlogged pitch at Granville Park.

The Eagles were braced for a big test, with their visitors having won all 17 league games this season to share pole position in the South Lancs and Cheshire Two.

Oswestry, by contrast, have endured a mixed campaign, winning seven of their 19 outings with 12 losses to lie mid table.

Heavy overnight rain led to water standing on the surface, with the hosts having little choice but to call off the encounter.

It was their second consecutive postponement following the previous week's call off at Wigan side Aspull, and was the fourth to be lost to the weather this season.

The game against Winnington Park has now been rearranged for Saturday, May 12.

There is no league action on Saturday as the club's annual Nigel Keighley Memorial Cup between Oswestry and Oswestry School takes centre stage at Granville Park (12noon).

Saints looking to net the perfect ten

AFTER a two-week before due to the weather, St Martins aim to make it 10 wins in a row in the West Midlands League division one when they take on Darlaston at Park Hall on Saturday (6pm).

After their last two trips to second placed Newport Town and Worcester Raiders were postponed, the Saints will look to hit the ground running this weekend against one of their close rivals.

Their revival has taken them up to fourth, one place above their Darlaston visitors who arrive on the back of a defeat last weekend.

Before their weekend showdown, Dan Stevens'

side had another big game on Wednesday night when they took on Allscott in the semi-final of the Commander Ethelston Cup at Whitchurch.

With no league game last weekend, the Saints at least managed to arrange a friendly, which resulted in a 6-2 victory against Wellington Amateurs at Shrewsbury's London Road.

Harrison Millington and Shawn Melusi both scored twice, along with Dave Easthope and Callum Graybrook (penalty).

"We weren't great, but we've not been great for a month now, but it was important to get minutes for

the players," said boss Stevens.

"It's a big week for us, but there's a lot riding on every game now. We need to make the most of our home games if we're going to finish second."

The Saints' big clash at Newport Town - postponed two weeks ago - has been rearranged for Easter Saturday (March 31), and their trip to Worcester Raiders has been rescheduled two days later for Easter Monday (April 2).

Those are their last two away games, while the other six outings will all be played at home.

COBRA hopes fade as Steelmen strike

RUGBY by John Bridgwater

COBRA'S chances of gaining promotion from rugby's Welsh League division two (north) faded after slipping to a 25-5 home defeat against one of their chief rivals Shotton Steel.

The Meifod men had gone into the game knowing that victory against their second placed visitors was a must if they were to keep alive realistic chances of a swift return to the first division.

But they were up against it as Shotton scored three tries to one, with their victory opening up an 11-point gap on their Llanfair hosts who do have a game in hand.

It was a vital win for the Steelmen in the race for second place, with impressive centre Shaun Myddleton their man-of-the-match with a hat-trick of tries to make light of the heavy conditions.

COBRA's plans were disrupted even before the first whistle with seven players either injured or unavailable, and an injury to Iwan Vaughan during the game did not help their cause.

Shotton went ahead with a penalty, then added an unconverted try, but the home side went close to a reply from a scrum that was brought down close to the visitors line.

Chances

The Steelmen escaped conceding a penalty try and, with the scrum being reset, this was to prove a pivotal moment as the visitors added a second touchdown, this time converted, for a handy 15-0 lead.

A penalty extended the advantage before a converted score in the second half effectively settled the issue with a 25-0 cushion.

COBRA, to their credit, kept battling away, but were unable to capitalise on their chances before working an overlap that saw fullback Richard Jones cross for a consolation try.

Despite that score, it all proved too little too late in an often scrappy encounter in muddy conditions.

Although runners-up position appears to be out of each, the Meifod men will be out to finish as high as they can in their remaining seven league games.

It was another disappointing result after bowing out of the ConwyLandRover North Wales Plate with a narrow 11-10 semi-final exit at Llanidloes just a few weeks back.

They have a chance for revenge when they head to Llani on Saturday in the league, before



Flanker Aled Humphreys drives forward for COBRA in their defeat against Shotton, with captain and prop Hywel Jones (left) and second row Bryn Edwards. ■ Pic: Gareth Owen.

visiting struggling Abergele the week after.

COBRA are again on the road seven days later with a clash away to runaway leaders Denbigh, and the sides then come face to face again a week later.

Shotton Steel's promotion push was helped by Llanidloes who ran out 31-5 victors against third placed Wrexham.

Llani made the most of their return to league action with four tries to pick up a bonus point, and are in sixth spot, just two points adrift of Rhyl.

They scored four tries through No8 and captain

Paul Jehu, prop Rhys Evans, winger Richard Evans along with a penalty score, while Adam Piced kicked all the conversions and a penalty.

WELSHPOOL, aiming to climb clear of basement danger in the same division, had no league action on Saturday. They are again without a game this weekend due to the Six Nations before resuming duty with a tricky trip to Shotton the following week.

Meanwhile, COBRA's youngsters kept their flag flying in the North Wales Youth Plate with a 28-5 victory over Ruthin.

Shropshire Senior Cup hopes over for Town

FC OSWESTRY Town's pursuit of the TJ Vickers Shropshire Senior Cup came to an end when they went out 2-1 in the semi-final against Haughmond at Ellesmere's Beech Grove.

Town paid the price for a slow start that saw them go two goals down, before rallying as a second half penalty from Jacob Farleigh gave them hope of victory. But their efforts just fell short as Midlands League premier division side Haughmond went through, and will play either Whitchurch Alport or Newport Town in the final.

Town reached the last four with a 4-1 victory over Ellesmere Rangers at Park Hall back in January, but were soon up against it in their midweek semi-final tie against their Shrewsbury rivals.

Seeking their first ever appearance in the final, they trailed after 11 minutes when Joe Parry's diagonal pass from left to right found Steve Hole who got past his marker before pulling the ball back to Scott Ryan to fire past keeper Louis Mackin.

Nine minutes later, they were down when Kevin Renshaw played the ball to Hole after his corner had been half cleared, and the striker drove his shot into the top of the net from the edge of the box.

Town, the North West Counties League division one side, battled to get back into the game and, after a slow start, began to come more into the game.

Gary Meradith beat the offside trap but lost out in a one-on-one with Haughmond keeper Sam Jones, and then Farleigh had a shot from the 18 yard box that just missed the target.

As the half wore on, Joe Newtown was next to come close for Oswestry, when he went on a mazy run but finished with a shot straight at the keeper.

After the break, the pattern of play continued in similar vein with Oswestry enjoying plenty of possession, but they struggled to convert their domination into a goal until 14 minutes from time, when they were awarded a penalty.

They got their reward when Meredith was tripped in the box by keeper Sam Jones from a long ball over the top, and Farleigh dispatched the penalty past Jones who escaped with a yellow card.

Despite continuing to push for the remainder of the game, that was how the scoring stayed, but Ryan Butcher's side could take heart from their performance after a slow start.

"We are disappointed with the result, but very pleased with the way we played," said FC Oswestry Town secretary Andy Burnett.

"We've just got to dust ourselves down now, and get ready for another big cup tie this week in the Macron Cup at Irlam."

■ **Leaders** St Martins Village were thwarted by the weather as their home clash with Wrockwaddine Wood Juniors in the Regional league division one was postponed.

Airgun League title race heading for tense finish

SHOOTING by John Bridgwater

to Castle's Richard Morgan, who replied in fine style, the two openers shooting 35.6 and 35.4 respectively.

Llanfair maintained a lead and prevailed 194.6 to 192.0 to record their fourth win of the season.

A battle of the big-hitters took place when third-placed Arddleen hosted second-placed Guilsfield A, where a truly colossal match took place - with no less than six possibles were scored. Sara Davies, Jack Francis, Martin Pearce and Richard Lewis for Arddleen, and Kieran and Chloe Cornell for Guilsfield A in what was a truly rare occurrence.

The final score was an astounding 206.9 to 208.6, the scales tipping in Guilsfield's favour.

Crew Green A visited Forden, where they

comfortably led from the off, never giving their hosts a chance to draw level.

CGA's solid scoring allowed them to clock up their seventh win of the season and bringing them into fourth place in the table. The match ended at 180.9 points to 196.7.

A close match at the Bowling Club saw a six-shooter Newtown edge past Guilsfield B (also down to six).

The home side started slowly, but as the league's premier shooting family, the Corbetts, took to the oche in the lower order, the scores drew level and finished in the hosts' favour 195.1 to 192.5.

Churchstoke entertained Crew Green B, and much talk of "smuggling peanuts" ensued.

In between threads of this fascinating discussion, some shooting took place, initially with the scoring firmly set in Churchstoke's favour.

However, despite a spirited last stand from

Ian Brown and Joe Hilditch, CGB were unable to clinch the match and Churchstoke prevailed. The peanuts were never found.

So, some excellent scoring again showed the high standards that the league has come to expect from the shooters.

Nine possibles were recorded with Martin Pearce and Richard Lewis (Arddleen) and Owen Stimpson (Churchstoke) scoring 35.3.

Jack Francis and Sara Davies (Arddleen) and Richard Morgan (CC) scored 35.4, Kieran Cornell of GA 35.5, while Chloe Cornell (GA) and Dai Tom Williams (LIC) weighed in with excellent 35.6's.

Match of the week: This has to be the epic duel between the league's heavyweights, Arddleen and Guilsfield A - a truly Titanic match.

Shooter of the week: Chloe Cornell, with her 35.6, takes the honours this time. Well done on a fantastic score, Chloe.

Butcher's boys pay for missed chances



Gary Meredith appears to have been fouled

MISSED chances proved costly as FC Oswestry Town were held 3-3 at home by Carlisle City in the Hallmark North West Counties League division one.

Having overturned a two-goal deficit to lead 3-2 in the second half, Town had their opportunities before being pegged back when Ryan Errington earned the Cumbrians a share of the spoils six minutes from time.

"We had nine or 10 good chances, and should have put the game to bed in the second half," said manager Ryan Butcher. "If you don't take your chances, then it comes back to bite you."

"The big difference was their keeper who made some unbelievable saves, but in the end it was still a good point against a good side."

The Oswestry hosts had started brightly, and carved a couple of opportunities, before Carlisle began to take a hold of the game and led 2-0 at the break through Lee Hool-ickin and James Earl.

They could have been further ahead but Town rallied in the second half to turn the game around courtesy of goals from Jacob Farleigh (59), Lok Yang (65) and Sam Thomas (75).

They had further openings, with Farleigh having a penalty saved, but hopes of victory were dashed when Carlisle, despite down to 10 men, earned parity six minutes from time through Errington.

The point, however, was still enough to lift Town up one place to 12th in the table as they prepare for a busy week at Irlam in the third round of the Macron Cup on Tuesday night, before hosting high flying Silsden in the league at Park Hall on Saturday (3pm).



Oswestry goalscorer Jacob Farleigh. ■ Pics: Nick Evans-Jones.

Will powers Pool to victory with double

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

TOP scorer Will Thomas bagged a brace as high flying Welshpool Town preserved their four-point lead at the top of the Spar Mid Wales League division one by edging out Llanfair United 2-0 at soggy Maesydre.

In a tight game of few chances in rain-drenched conditions, the league leaders took all three points with a late goal in each half from their predatory front runner.

There was little between the sides as a deluge took its toll, but Pool got their noses in front two minutes before the interval when Thomas pounced on a defensive slip to run through and slot the ball home.

Llanfair came close a few times in the second period but, as they pushed for an equaliser, Thomas grabbed a second of the game late on to settle the issue.

LLANRRHAEADR stepped up the pressure in second place after coming from behind to secure a 3-1 victory at Kerry to stay four points behind - with five games in hand.

They had trailed when the Lambs scored against the run of play through reserve teamer Ben Davies, but two close range goals in a minute from Dan Graham turned the game around.

Graham forced home the first after Joe Vaughan had headed across goal, and moments later the striker converted a cross from Chris Aitkin.

Khyam Wyton netted a third with 10 minutes remaining to wrap up the points when coolly firing in from the edge of the box after the hosts had failed to clear.

Despite the defeat, depleted Kerry could take heart from their display with debutant keeper Trystan Davies impressing between the posts.

Third placed Llanidloes Town saw their hopes of making ground on the leaders frustrated as their trip to rock bottom Machynlleth was postponed due to a waterlogged ground.

Ten-man Knighton Town stayed in the hunt for a top five finish after digging deep to overcome Bow Street 3-2 in a hard-fought affair, while Aberaeron won a thriller 4-3 at Tywyn Bryncrig.

Berriew's clash at struggling Borth United in the first division also succumbed to a soaked surface following the thaw and subsequent rain.

Carno and Churchstoke were also sidelined after their respective games against Radnor Valley and Llandrindod Wells were called off.

In division two, Llansantffraid Village's promotion push was put on hold as their top-of-the-table showdown with leaders Builth Wells at Treflan was postponed. Montgomery's clash at Hay St Mary's was another victim of the elements.



Llanfair skipper Matthew Bumford talks to the referee on a soggy night at Maesydre. ■ Pic: Jon Richards.

Dyffryn Banw were 2-1 winners at Newbridge to climb up to eighth in the second division table, while the goals flowed at Abermule who hammered 10-man Talgarth Town 11-1 to consolidate their place in the top half of the table.

■ Welshpool's Will Thomas continues to set the pace in the Spar Mid Wales League division one scoring charts.

The forward has netted 25 goals this term, 24 in the league and one in the cup, to lead the way by five goals from Pool team-mate Adam Davies, who has bagged 20 this term (17 in the league and three in the cups).

Aberaeron's Matthew Davies is third on 17 (15-2), one ahead of Radnor Valley's Joey Price (15-1) while Knighton Town's Connor Bird makes up the top five with 15.

Llansantffraid Village striker Nathan Prodder is the second division hot-shot with 24 goals (all in the league), lying six clear of Joel Evans (Brecon Northcote) and Builth Wells forward Richie Powell, who are both on 18.

Fourth is Abermule's David Antony with 14 (eight in the league and four in the cup).

New Saints net late point at students

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

need to be more clinical."

The Saints were on the front foot in the first half against the students, but were unable to find the finishing touch to several promising positions.

The lively Ryan Brobbel saw his low effort from eight yards deflected past the post, Greg Draper had a shot blocked while Jamie Mullan sliced well wide from the edge of the box.

Draper then failed to capitalise following an assist from Brbbel who then forced a save from home keeper Will Fuller.

The well-marshalled Met, despite looking quick to break, rarely suggested they could find a way past keeper Andy Wycherley as the first half ended goalless.

Straight after the interval, Aeron Edwards saw an effort from distance well tipped over the bar by Fuller, while Brobbel struck the post and Saunders headed against the bar.

The university had lost all four league games in the second phase of the season, and also went down 1-0 to the Saints in the final of the Nathaniel MG Cup.

But, working and running tirelessly, they began to sense they could get something out of the game with Emlyn Lewis sending an ambitious overhead kick wide, while Evans forced a low save from Wycherley.

They were almost presented with the opening goal 10 minutes from time when Adam Roscrow latched onto a headed back pass from TNS substi-

tute Ben Clarke, but his angled lob from the left struck the bar.

As the game became increasingly stretched, Met keeper Fuller tipped over a sliced clearance in a scramble at the other end before the drama arrived moments later.

Evans looked to have won it with his near post volley from a long throw flicked on by Lewis for his 13th goal of the season, but TNS showed their champion qualities to salvage the game through Kauber's first goal for the club with virtually the last action of the encounter.

Saunders' well placed header from the right appeared to be going in at the far corner, but the Estonian striker followed up to make sure by nodding over the line.

Meanwhile, Newtown's hopes of making the Welsh Premier end of season play-offs suffered a major blow after a second half strike from Joe Phillips secured Aberystwyth Town a 1-0 win at Latham Park.

After a scrappy first half, the breakthrough came on the hour mark when John Owen found Phillips on the left, and he cut inside before smashing his angled shot into the corner. Newtown had late chances to level it up, but it was too late as they sunk to defeat that sees could dent hopes of finishing top of the Play-Off Conference.

The Robins are now six points adrift of play-off rivals Barry Town, while Aberystwyth's fortunes are looking up as they moved clear of the basement places. Their victory came in a game that was a also dress rehearsal for next month's Welsh Cup semi-final.

Ladies are out-Foxed – and title hopes fade

THE New Saints Ladies slumped 5-1 at leaders Loughborough Foxes Ladies to effectively end any hope of challenging for the FA Women's Premier League Midlands division one title.

The defeat - their third of the season in the league - leaves the Saints in third spot, and 12 points adrift of the Foxes with just seven games remaining.

It was a harsh scoreline on the visitors, who conceded two goals deep in injury time as they pushed to get something from the game.

They made a poor start after going behind on just two minutes to a goal from Eva Rogers, but steadied the ship as Emily Ridge levelled matters midway through the first period.

That was how the score stayed until half time, before the Foxes regained the lead 11 minutes after the break through Laura Steele.

Substitute Becky McGrother made it 3-1 on 84 minutes before Rogers and McGrother both struck their second goals of the game four and six minutes into injury time respectively to wrap up the victory.

■ TNS under-19s also suffered a setback in their title pursuit in the Welsh Premier Development League (north) when downed 2-0 at high flying Airbus UK Broughton.

The defeat leaves the second placed Saints four points adrift of the Wingmakers, but they do have three games in hand.

Waterloo net final spot in Tanners Cup

WATERLOO Rovers booked their place in the final of the Montgomeryshire Tanners Town Cup final with a 2-1 passage against Llanfair United reserves.

Nathan James and Charlie Proctor found the net for Rovers, with Ashley Davies responding for United.

Elsewhere, waterlogged pitches hit the fixture programme with a raft of games postponed including title chasing Bishop's Castle home clash with Llanfyllin Town in the Montgomeryshire League division one.

Llanymynech against Maes-yr-handir was also off along with Meifod's home encounter with Trewern United, as all first division games were postponed.

Results

Division two: Carno Res 7 Kerry Res 2, Llanfyllin Town Res v Forden Utd (postponed), Welshpool Town Res 5 Abermule Res 4.

■ Chirk AAA missed a chance of making ground on the leaders in the Welsh National League premier division after being held to a goalless draw at Lex Glyndwr.

Two-man side put up a fight

TWO-MAN Caereinion A put in a battling performance before being edged out 6-4 against a lacklustre Myddle side in the Oswestry Table Tennis League division one.

Philip Langford put Caereinion on the front foot with a great win over the higher ranked Stephen Roberts with a 12-10 fifth set win.

This was followed with a three-set win for Chris Chennetier against Ian Turner.

However, Myddle were not to be denied the win with the benefit of three forfeits, with Roberts beating Chennetier and Turner getting the better of Langford.

The doubles match proved to be the decider with honours going in Myddle's favour.

It's Welsh Cup last eight time

THE quarter-finals of the Central Wales Cup get under way this week-end with three ties being played.

Llanfair United are home to Knighton Town on Saturday (2.30), and on the same day there is a Spa derby when Llandrindod Wells welcome local rivals Builth Wells (1pm).

On Sunday, Waterloo Rovers will look to pull off an upset at home to Cymru Alliance outfit Caerswg (2.30). Guilsfield entertain Bow Street on Tuesday (7.45pm kick off).

Sport

Air Rifle
League heading for
tense finish – P38

Football
Will powers Pool
at double – P39



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Liam races home for a UK bronze



Muddy marvel Liam Rawlings

OSWESTRY Olympian runner Liam Rawlings continues to impress after finishing third in the UK in the Inter-Counties Cross Country Championships.

Rawlings and fellow Olympian Tom Wilde were selected to represent Shropshire at the championships held on Saturday at Prestwold, Loughborough.

After gaining a second place in the UK Challenge Series in Liverpool earlier in the season, Rawlings was aiming for a top three place against the best under-15 athletes in the UK.

With recent snow and heavy rain over the past week, conditions underfoot were treacherous with the grassy field turned into a mud bath. However, Rawlings, who has trained hard throughout the winter, made an excellent start in the front pack from over 300 competitors.

He maintained his pace to stay in contention as the front runners began to speed up and still had enough strength left for a sprint finish over the last 100 metres to claim the bronze medal.

Wilde started the season in fine form winning the first Shropshire Young Athletes League Cross Country League race for Oswestry Olympians. However, injury scuppered his winter training plans.

He managed to develop sharpness in time for the Shropshire County Championships in January to qualify for the Shropshire team and, after a few weeks of quality training, he was prepared for the Inter-Counties race.

He started in the middle of the pack, but showed great determination as he worked his way through the runners to finish a creditable 115th in a field of 281 athletes.

It was fitting that the outstanding achievements of these two youngsters was witnessed by Oswestry Olympians coach Tracy Bathers who has given so much time to young athletes over the years and who was present as a member of the Shropshire management team.

Llanfair boss picks up Spar award

LLANFAIR United player boss Luke Gethin has picked up the Spar Mid Wales League first division's manager of the month award for February.

Gethin took over from Rhys Stephens on a temporary basis at the start of the year, and will remain at the helm until the end of the season.

Abermule's David Anthony landed the second division's manager of the month honour.

Welshpool striker Adam Davies, who has netted 20 times this season, was the first division's player of the month, and Joe Evans, of Brecon

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

Northcote, took the second division honour.

Meanwhile, holders Berriew face a tricky quarter-final trip to Bow Street in their defence of the Spar Mid Wales League Cup.

League leaders Welshpool Town and Llanfair United both have home advantage after being paired against Radnor Valley and Knighton Town respectively, while the other tie sees Carno wel-

come Aberaeron.

All ties will be played on Saturday, April 7 with a 2.30pm kick off.

■ Welshpool, four points clear at the top of the Spar Mid Wales League division one, will look to stay ahead of the pack when they head to Tywyn Brynrcrug on Saturday.

Should there be any slips, Llanrhaeadr are ready to pounce in second spot, and will be fancied to return with the points from their clash at basement side Machynlleth.

Town gear up to face the leaders

FC Oswestry Town face the task of putting the brakes on Silsden when they tackle the leaders of the Hallmark North West Counties League division one at Park Hall on Saturday (3pm).

Silsden arrive from West Yorkshire sitting pretty at the top of the league, with a nine point advantage on second placed Litherland.

They have won four of their last six outings, while their Oswestry hosts have won just once in six.

The Shropshire side were frustrated last weekend when held 3-3 at home to Carlisle City, but the point has lifted them up to 12th in the table.

They still have 13 league games left, as well as interest in the Macron Cup which saw them travel to Irlam in the last 16 on Tuesday night.

"We were poor for the first 20 minutes, but after that grew into the game and played very well for 70 minutes against a very good side," said manager Ryan Butcher. "In the end, we were unlucky, but we need to be more clinical and take our chances."

■ Guilsfield will look to consolidate their place among the top sides in the Huws Gray Cymru Alliance in Saturday's test at home to Porthmadog (2.30).

Despite back back-to-back postponements, the Guils remain third in the table, and four points adrift of second placed Airbus UK with a couple of games in hand.

Although Caernarfon Town have the title firmly in their grasp, the villagers have plenty to play for this term in both the league and cup.

Hopes of getting back to action were again scuppered when their clash away to one of their chief rivals Holywell Town was called off due to a waterlogged surface.

"They have been struggling with their pitch of late, so we half expected it to be off," said Guils boss Nathan Leonard whose side are desperate to get back to action.

With Andy Wycherley having returned to TNS on loan, Lee Andrew will take over in goal for Guilsfield.

Oswestry hosting memorial match

OSWESTRY Rugby Club stage their annual Keighley Memorial Cup between Oswestry and Oswestry School at Granville Park on Saturday (12noon).

The game is to remember Nigel Keighley, 67, who was a former player and club stalwart with the Eagles, and was also a design and technology teacher, housemaster and the main rugby coach at Oswestry School.

Funds raised from the game will go to the charity, The 53 Foundation, which creates active opportunities for people with disabilities.

Across the border, COBRA bid to turn the tables on Llanidloes when they head to their Powys rivals in Saturday's Welsh League division two (north) encounter.

TNS ON BRINK OF TITLE NO7

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

THE finishing line's in sight for The New Saints who can all but wrap up the JD Welsh Premier title in Friday night's top-of-the-table encounter with Bala Town at Park Hall (7.45).

Should the Saints prevail, they will effectively again be champions despite requiring one more point to make mathematically sure of a record seventh consecutive league crown.

With a superior goal difference of plus 40 with just six games remaining, it would take a freak sequence of results to deny the pacesetters who hold a commanding 12-point lead at the top.

After salvaging a last gasp 1-1 draw at Cardiff Met University last weekend, manager Scott Ruscoe will be looking for his side to get back to winning ways against Friday night's visitors who are unbeaten in their last six outings.

The second placed Lakesiders arrive at Park Hall on the back of an excellent 2-1 win at Bangor City to boost their own hopes of playing European football in the summer, and will be keen to avenge a couple of 3-0 defeats earlier this season.

"Bala are our nearest challengers, so we will be looking to put them to bed," said Ruscoe. "They showed they can beat us in the Welsh Cup final last year, so we need to be on our game."

"They made some good signings in the January transfer window, and come here on the back of a great win at Bangor City."

"It was frustrating not to pick up three points against Cardiff Met as we would have been that much closer to the league. But it was another point to winning the title, and hopefully we can get over the line in the next couple of weeks."

With TNS on the brink of claiming the title, their next two fixtures have been changed due to television scheduling by S4C.

Their encounter with the Druids has now been put back to Sunday, March 25 (with a 2pm kick-off), and the Saints will visit Bangor City on Saturday, March 31 with a 5.15pm kick-off.

Titans trio are off to Euros



Angharad Evans, Charlie Hutchison and Freya Anderson are heading to the European Juniors

THREE Ellesmere College Titans swimming stars have been picked to represent Great Britain at the 2018 European Junior Swimming Championships.

The trio will head to Helsinki in Finland for the competition from July 4 to 8.

Freya Anderson (British and World Junior champion), Charlie Hutchison (British silver medallist and European Youth Olympic bronze medallist) and Angharad Evans (former European Juniors Team GB member) have won places following their outstanding performances at last week's British Championships.

Anderson, 17, Hutchison, 15, and 14-year-old Evans now form part of a 30-strong team which

boasts six British champions that includes Anderson, who defended her 100m Freestyle title in Edinburgh.

The trio are all experienced internationals and will be following in the lanes of their teammates Phoebe Griffiths and Ellinor Southward who both competed in last year's championships in Israel. More than 50 countries participate in the championships; an event in which British Swimming has historically enjoyed significant podium success and is now lying in eighth place in the all-time medal table.

Tim Jones, British Swimming's head of elite development, said: "This is an extremely important year for British Swimming."

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